



Siddhas

Masters of the Basics

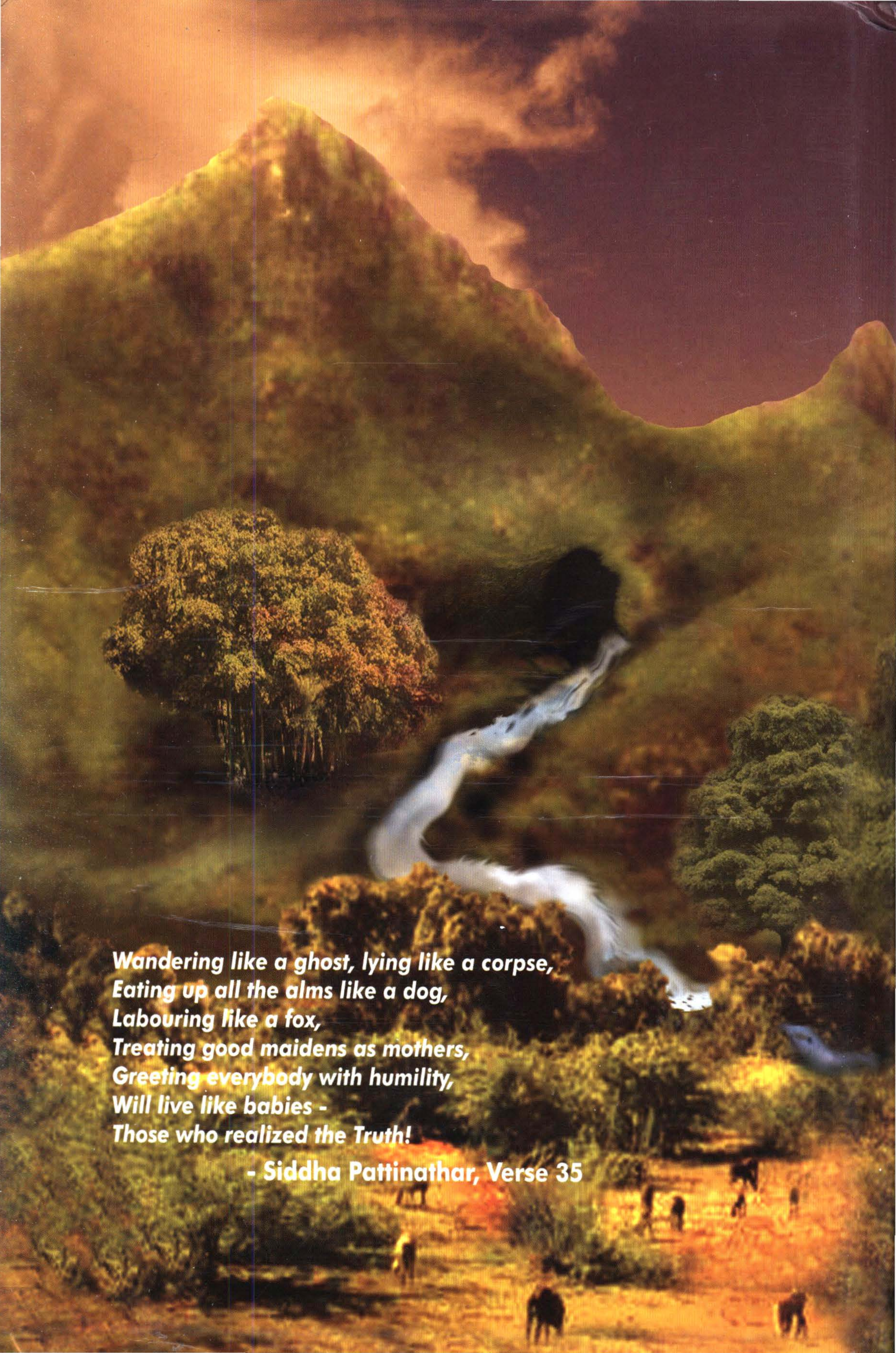
Pal Pandian

Siddhant Masters of the Basics

Pal Pandian



• Achala Siddha



**Wandering like a ghost, lying like a corpse,
Eating up all the alms like a dog,
Labouring like a fox,
Treating good maidens as mothers,
Greeting everybody with humility,
Will live like babies -
Those who realized the Truth!**

- Siddha Pattinathar, Verse 35



Pal Pandian
- Author



Siddhas Masters of the Basics

by
PAL PANDIAN

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Dedicated

To my parents

Whose love and care reflects as the surrender to my

Guru

***“Realisation is, seeing the Guru’s Holy form,
Realisation is, chanting the Guru’s Holy name,
Realisation is, hearing the Guru’s Holy words,
Realisation is, musing on the Guru’s Holy being”***

Thirumanthiram-3000, verse 139, By Siddha Thirumoolar

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The book *Siddhas - Masters of the Basics* is better described as a journey unfolding into the unknown dimensions of the Ancient Siddha Path. Born from the blessings and guidance of my Masters, it poses a new beginning for the world to step into; a first of its kind.

I would like to thank Mr. Kumarasamy for his beautiful contribution to this book by helping translate into English the chapter *The Esoteric and Yogic Significance of Idols* from my original Tamil writings.

I am profoundly grateful to Sathya Amma who typeset my earlier articles with earnest care and compiled them in a single format. I thank her, for her valued contribution to this book.

I thank Shyam who serenely designed the pictures with great interest and dedication, paying attention to the relevance of the concerned topics.

I am grateful to Amrita who splendidly designed the front and back cover of the book. I express my heartfelt thanks and feel indebted to Amrita, Shyam. Amritha's valuable contribution in correction of details and pictures, editing of matter and bringing it to its present form like a co-author has been very helpful in materializing this book. Alongside her family responsibilities, she dedicated herself to this work.

I thank my friend Manickavasagam for writing the foreword to *Siddhas Masters of the Basics*, with his unique eye.

This book of the Siddha Tradition has come in such a beautiful way into our hands in its finished form by my publisher Achala Siddha, an organisation for promoting ancient oral tradition. I thank IT eternally.

Finally, I thank Sri Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai, for allowing me access to the ashram library and offering me the valuable resource of the glorious works of Sri Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi.

In Truth, the wisdom put together in the form of this book are sacred treasures of the ancient divine Sages. To Them, I am profoundly grateful for using me as a mere instrument in the divine work of bringing it to the world as a first, in form of this book.

Salutations to the Siddhas!!

FOREWORD

When I was asked to write a foreword for this book I thought they were joking because I have no right or qualification to write a foreword to a book about the Siddha's system. But I have all the right and qualification to write about the Author.

My association with the Author is of 'Daiva Gathi'; Divine Will. In this birth, I know him for the past twelve years. It was in 1996 I happened to come across a verse written by a Saint in appreciation of another Saint's life. I was strongly reminded of the Author's life. I copied the verse in a small paper and handed it to the Author as a compliment.

The verse is:

*"Making others to see the gestures of the Sages,
is rare of the rarest;
This Man, of virtue offering his worthy life for the same,
Lost his conditioning, attained the Bliss."*

I find it very apt to use this verse here because this verse itself is the Author.

I am embarrassed to use the word 'Author', to refer to him. I am comfortable in referring to the Author as 'my friend' in this note. In my opinion the right and best choice of words referring to him is 'this disciple', as he was a thorough disciple; rather a rare disciple of this Siddha system. I was inspired to be a good disciple to my Guru because of my friendship with my friend, Pal Pandian. I felt and found so many times he loved his life living as a disciple, not as a Master. I am sure he will leave from this existence as a perfect disciple to his Guru and to the Siddha system.

There are two Tamil sayings by the woman Saint Awwaiyar,

'The learned are fond of the learned.'

And

'Wherever the learned are eminence awaits him'.

(Here 'learned' does not refer to the scholar)

I realized the real meaning of these sayings only when I spent times in touch with my friend. Whenever we ourselves searched for Saints, particularly the Reluctant Masters in various places, it amazed me to find the change in Their attitude towards my friend. Usually They would be unapproachable to the common-eyes, keeping their behaviour as an amour of resistance for others who comes into Their vicinity. Unusually, they were very open with him. They showered Their blessings even to me because of him.

They also shared the majesty of the system, They never sent him empty handed. Rare were those days. These uncommon things were made possible only because of my friend's 'Guru Bakthi'.

Invariably, whoever comes across my friend will appreciate his love for his Guru. What my friend shares thorough this book is really hard earned by losing his bright academic and material comforts. But he never felt it as a loss as the mystic hands of the divine always guided him.

While he was suffering in his existential crisis, he didn't identify himself with any tradition or path as people usually do. The reverse happened. The mystic hands of the Siddha tradition came forward to embrace him; to remind him of his inner nature, reveal his roots and the real meaning of life and true meaning in living.

Making journey in this tradition is not playful like attending a workshop or reading some spiritual books or listening intellectual concepts, but courageously risking of one's life out of love and trust. This is what SIDDHA MASTERS always expect.

What he shares thorough this book is completely original and free from conventional academics. It is from Oral lineage and a one to one Master - disciple tradition.

I would like to share one of his experiences. He heard of a Siddha Master who lived in Kolli Hills, not known to the world. Only a few knew Him. When my friend first started to search His whereabouts, he failed so many times. Finally, my friend met Him in an unexpected circumstance. My friend was shocked to know that the Siddha Master lived in a village field in a hut, not known to anyone, simply showing as a simple peasant.

The Siddha Master was very simple, like an ordinary man. When my friend asked, 'are you the one who lived in Kolli hills?' He simply nodded and asked him for a pen and paper and scribbled something and showing the paper asked my friend, 'Is this your natal astrological birth chart?' My friend was surprised and said 'yes'. He said he did this not to show that I know you but because only then will you believe my words. But, He didn't teach my friend anything and sent my friend back saying this is not your time for being here with me. My friend had to visit now and then. The acquaintance became more.

One day He wanted my friend to come at some other auspicious time to impart some of the cardinal dimensions of healing along with other aspects of the Siddha's system.

In His Mahasamadhi, this Master wished my friend to practice Siddha medicine free of cost. After this, my friend is sticking to the vow given to his Teacher.

That Teacher was his medicinal Siddha Teacher. As per the medicinal teacher's wish, my friend would go to areas in Madurai district to help the people remain in good spirits and health. At one point he had to do native Siddha healing camps in slum areas; around 300 people a day and later for whoever came from all over India and around the world and knocked his door. While living in Arunachala Hill area his comprehensive healing care service emerged with a loving heart and soaring smile, without a concern for financial or personal gain which installed the acquaintance of this ancient tradition to people's heart. Even if his healing dimension has ended now, this book has come out as an extension of his services.

My friend Pal has learnt the different aspects of the Siddha system from many resources and Teachers. He has mentioned a few of them in the book.

But he has his SatGuru. Let me first apologise to my friend for writing about this. I would like to talk about his SatGuru. He is a perfect Siddha, a Gnani.... Indescribable - 'Anirvasya'.

The most essential thing in any spiritual journey or the true reason for all spiritual practices to exist is for one to fall into one's destination of 'Unconditional Love'. This Unconditional Love is the apex of Life, the Bindu, the acme of Nature.

This is true Divinity! The Divine, clad in human form as a Sat Guru, comes to Earth and lives in the world only to implant unconditional love in those who stand ready. My friend received His Guru's grace with all his heart, as this is the most adorable and rare happening in the spiritual journey. His Guru's soaring Spirit is what I always find in him.

I wish to put this in also in another way. The following verse is from a Saint;

'Andan Arulai Enni Agam Kulaiyalutrarkku Vendamam Veru Tavam'

'For them whose soul melts by contemplating the Grace of their Lord, Guru:

No need of any penance to adhere.'

I used to tell my friend he needs no Tapas. My friend has never spoken about his Guru neither to his friends and associates and nor has he done so in the book, as it is most intimate and personal to him. But the Truth is that His Guru is the only Authority based on which he has written the book, Siddhas Masters of the Basics.

The Siddha Tradition is potentially subversive. My friend more than a mere interpreter immersed in this mystic cult as his own has worked with it, has been absorbed by it, has swum in it and has been laboured by it for years. Now as the extension of his living in it as the way of the Siddhas, has emerged this book in hand - Siddhas Masters of the Basics, with a humble bow but jubilant smiles on his face declaring, 'At last, Siddhas have come'.

What he shares through this book has a lot of limitations because the Siddha system is completely an Oral, Master-disciple Tradition. Even I asked my friend how are you going to share the intrinsic aspect of the Siddhas, which are beyond the scope of writing?

What I meant by intrinsic part of the Siddhas is for example what my friend was taught and by practicing, is the Siddhas system of Healing. One cannot understand or practice Siddha medicine without knowing its healing aspect otherwise it is like some other medicinal system - without divinity. Healing is always about sensing the nature of a person and not just calculating the symptoms of his body.

The genuine Siddha works with the karma of the person suffering from disease by the help of the Divine. My friend used to suffer a lot because of this healing practice so many times. I remember he suffered by the afflicting karma of his patients but he never complained or even spoke of this to others. The worst was when once he was paralysed, but his Guru's grace recovered him. Sometimes he even fought with the Divine for the life-extension of his associates or patients suffering from fatal diseases and won the karmic destiny too. I don't want to talk of those things here.

The ability to heal is realising the hidden influence of karma and dealing with it. To sit close with the Divine is the central nerve of the Siddhas healing system. This cannot be revealed through books. Just the medicinal aspect of the Siddhas cannot be completely revealed in books, one can then understand about the Siddhas essential aspects; Vaasi yoga, Tantric Upasana and Their unique aspect of Gnana!

Surely, they cannot be revealed and dealt thorough a book. But one can inspire it and give a glimpse about this ancient path to others by a book. For those who are really interested may come and learn about the intrinsic aspects of this path personally from my friend. I hope this is his wish too.

Until now my friend has been known to our Society as a, 'bare foot Siddha Healer', who doesn't charge and refuses to accept money for medicines or consultations. It was through this mask he relates with society but I know he is really different from what he shows.

Through this book, he is coming to limelight. It will be a shock for the circles, who merely know him as a Siddha doctor. Some of them may arrive to hasty conclusions that he is getting spoiled because he is coming to limelight through this book.

The information he shares through this book has it own authority. To share these kinds of insights a person needs Sruthi, Guru and Suyanubavam. What he shares thorough this book is his Suyanubhavam (personal experience)

confirmed by his system and the mystical verses of the Siddhas (Sruthi). This authority will guard my friend from all the negative aspects of coming to limelight.

More clearly than me, my friend knows he is putting to stake his anonymous personal life for the purpose of his life's mission. It is his love for his system and Guru that I would like to remind the verse once again.

I would like to thank Achala Siddha, the Publisher, who has rightly identified my friend for his valuable service to humanity through the great tradition of the Siddhas and their System.

- Manickavasagam



A Note from the Author

'You cannot differentiate if a Siddha is working or playing', my teacher once said!

If you are normally not the type to get involved in a book, this book will demand it from you. But, if you take it up as an intellectual journey, it will tire you. This book is not meant for passive readers. It assumes the nature of the Siddhas themselves; to demand more and to shake your conditioning; for the Siddhas are the cyclonic storms shaking and uprooting trees!

Nowadays, not many are deeply aware or even familiar with the Ancient Siddha Tradition and its cryptically written sacred verses. The Siddhas, the ever-present Immortal Masters, and their Lives are known and cherished by only a few. Apart from the apparent disappearance of this cult, this tradition thrives on and continues to flourish hidden away from the averted eyes of the world.

The book, Siddhas - Masters of the Basics has been born out of an earnest wish to rekindle, revitalise and share the wisdom, emanating from this unique age old sacred Tradition of the Ancient Tamil Siddhas, with today's post modern world.

In different parts of the world many ancient traditions have flourished through the ages such as the Hermetic tradition, Taoist tradition, Cabbalistic tradition, Vedic tradition etc and of course the Siddha Tradition. So, before we begin our journey into the ancient yet present world of the Siddhas it would be useful to know precisely how any tradition is meant to serve humanity and what its teachings are meant to bring into our lives.

The Works and Texts of most ancient Traditions are in forms of verses, compositions, poems, stories or even occurrences and the messages are by and large metaphorically expressed. The Sages illustrated their messages using legendary characters and composed verses in a cryptic and symbolist language. They even depicted significant events and ways of life through the course of ancient mythological epics and thus assembled their sacred insights and teachings as their Works. Till date, Their wisdom, insights and sacred teachings remain recorded and yet stay concealed within the metaphors, legendary characters and cryptic notes. Without proper decoding the hidden significance and priceless essence remains beyond common understanding.

With this view in mind, myths really cannot be read as mere tales or stories but are to be deeply understood as they contain the answers for today. There is no doubt these revered ancient Works are nothing less than a gift of grace to be kept continued for coming generations.

There came a time when I was frequently asked about the verses written by the Ancient Siddhas; *do the ancient cryptic versed sacred texts truly shed any guiding light for the world we live in today?* Most people wanted to know if the oldest Tradition is still suitable as well as applicable to lifestyles of today, a world glaringly distant from the ancient days! And some, already intrigued by this grand Tradition eagerly asked whether the ancient Sages have revealed remedies for present day problems related to personality disorders, stress, incurable diseases, etc.

It was in response to this that I first begin penning down a few words. I have included some of these responses under *Section Two, Tree of Life*. All the same, I always did hold a dear wish to share the life-nourishing learning's bestowed upon me by these revered Saints. And this I have included as the final section, *Reluctant Masters*. Through the course of this book, I have also included some unbelievable or incomprehensible aspects and from time to time have authenticated these with either verses from their Works or a few words quoted by my teachers and a few personal life incidents and experiences as well.

A Siddha Masters approach is of '*Salvation in the Wilderness*'; Life gets altered to an organic sense in place of the mathematical attitude prevalent today. I would like to believe this book urges to rekindle and imbibe such legendary values into present day life in the attempt to unfold and realise our intrinsic potential. Now and then, it is possible a reader may choose to interpret in terms of hard facts; this would only be a hindrance. So all I can do is to offer a gentle hint - to start from wherever you stand.

In the First Section, I have added '*Tales from the Immortals*' not as mere Salutations to the Siddhas but as the Invocation of Their everlasting spirit.

As a gesture of my gratitude to the Masters, I have even included the Yogic dimension of the Siddha system as a part of this book. I must explain that I received all teachings as Oral Teachings only after initiation from the wandering Siddha clan of the Kancha Mountains.

Here I would like to thank Amritha, an ardent devotee of Bhagwan Yogi Ramsuratkumar, the Divine Beggar. Her interest not only kindled an urge in me to write but to also include certain areas which otherwise would have been left untouched in the course of this book. While working on certain topics as and when she encountered certain doubts in areas spoken of lightly it motivated me into incorporating the necessary details and expanding select areas in depth. We also went on to exploit topics of close relevance to the 'day to day' world of today. She brought all my articles with an easy flow and coherence into publication form.

My Guru blessings be with her, ever.

To some readers certain areas in the book may appear contradictory but I would like to clarify that in all actuality it is merely complimentary. And even

though from time to time I have used specific terminology while describing a Siddha, such as Tantric Siddha, or Yogic Siddha or a wandering Siddha, in Truth no single classification stands applicable to a Siddha. All classifications are the multifarious aspects that flourish within Him.

It gives me great happiness to say this book has come about as a ‘happening’ entirely orchestrated by the ever-present boundless grace of the Sat Guru, for which I am very gracious. As for myself, this revered ancient Tradition has brought me ‘Home’! It has reminded me of my uncompromising, rebellious spirit without which spontaneity cannot be and nor can there be the knowingness of the spirit of spontaneity to be uncompromising, rebellious and ever free.

The great saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa once said *‘I will give up twenty thousand such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man.’*

If this book inspires even a single reader towards a genuine journey into the world of the Siddhas, I will consider the purpose of this book fulfilled.

Pal Pandian



PREFACE

With a deeply revered approach we begin our journey into Siddhas - Masters of the Basics... to reacquaint ourselves with the ancient Siddha Tradition rising from the Southern part of India, present day state of Tamil Nadu.

I would like to initiate with an interesting fact -

Each one of us, are always in a deeply continued connectivity with our roots.

Let us first establish a simple and precise understanding of these roots, the deep connectedness and the constant influence it has on us as individuals and on humanity as a whole, at any given moment.

These roots that I speak of are termed 'Samskaras' in Indian terminology, which literally means 'refining'. Samskaras can be defined as the life-shaping forces, inherited individually as well as collectively by each one of us. Our Samskaras or inherent patterns work and influence our psyche internally as well as externally and form our psychic attitudes. In this way, we can call ourselves the continuation of our ancestors. Each moment holds an ongoing reverberation emitting the calls of our Ancients through the genetic map of our psyche.

Moving to the western front for a moment, the famous psychiatrist C.G Jung, of the last century expounded this very elementary psychic attitude as 'Archetypes'. He defines it as:

The factors and motives that arrange the psychic elements into certain images, characterised as archetypal, but in such a way that they can only be recognised by the effects they produce. They exist unconsciously and presumably, thus forming the structural dominance of the psyche in general. As priori conditioning factors they represent a special psychological instance of the biological pattern of behaviour, which gives all things their specific qualities.'

He says an archetypal content expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors.

By this we can somewhat fathom that our personal archetypes are arising from and are ever rooted in the collective archetypes of primitive traditions. Whether we are consciously aware of it or not, evidently it holds ancient history, and undoubtedly one and all are connected to their ancient roots. But this subterranean connectedness or bond also undergoes modification and change depending upon our present day living conditions and expresses it's self according to that.

Speaking of Tradition, we cannot help but notice an undeniable oneness in all Ancient Traditions. They all come across as one in their nature of surging inspiration, deep insights and blazing quests to gain an in-depth understanding of the hidden dimensions of the dynamic mystery called Life. Universally, Traditions speak of rituals; practices or techniques devoted towards an inner journey aimed at the betterment of humanity as a whole, through their dimensions of Healing methods, Medicine, Alchemy, Astrology etc. All in all, most of these mythological cults touch upon at least a few if not all these dimensions.

Interestingly, in the Epics and Mythical Tales narrated through Tradition, the illustrated legendary characters are often described with inherent extended faculties of flying, clairvoyance, psycho-kinesis etc. It has been said people living in the Lemuria continent had all these faculties and would naturally utilise their third eye!

The underlying yet strongly resonating message emanating through their livingness is the ever-prevalent flow of utter humility and the deep harmony shared with Mother Nature.

With our archetypes rooted to the primitive-age archetypes, one might expect each of us to have quite naturally inherited those very extended faculties, but strangely enough, we don't seem to have any of them as part of our natural actions or habits! As surprising and unbelievable as this may sound to some, these faculties haven't been destroyed and do remain latent within us. I have explained through a simple elucidation.

As time went by, Man evolved. Unfortunately, for him, he gradually lost all humility towards Mother Nature and in its place grew dominant over Her. This altered approach from humility to dominance was even joined by a strong change in the social order. Together, it caused the faculties inherent to Man to gradually project outwards. Today, they express in the form of the Object Oriented Lifestyle. In other words, the faculties within got projected as object oriented technological knowledge. We see them everywhere as the objects of our inventions - Airplanes, Cameras, TV, Locomotives, Robots, and Cybernetic Revolutions etc.

How did this projection come about? Somewhere along passing times Man tried to gain happiness by projecting his 'inherency' into object oriented, materialistic approaches. Soon enough he found himself entangled in his own web of created objects and had already begun losing his own livingness by starting to invest his nature into man-made objects.

Till today, these objects continue to demand an excessive indulgence that keeps man obsessively identified with the object itself. And

inevitably, this only leads him towards further indulgence – a continuance of a vicious circle!

Now, Man continues to live in this effort! Today sees us in the Utopian place of 'Automation in everything'. Artificial Intelligence, Cloning, Stem Cell Research and One Crop Harvests etc. are fresh evidences.

Even a single glance at recent generations reveals how archetypes have undergone change. Not many are familiar with the great Epics like Ramayana, Mahabharatha and other ancient mythological tales of our land. Instead, their value system is highly influenced by advanced Technology and of course, Movies, Television programmes, Cartoons, Modern Music etc. through which an unnatural amount of violence is constantly being displayed.

Today, how people decide to live makes their lives verily disconnected from root values. Under the conditioning of our current period, we function in a mentally oriented fashion. Wedged into this conditioning we can only obsessively push to interpret and function with a mentally dominated approach. It's a shameful truth - humanity has been moving in a direction, which now screams for the revival of the lost values of our roots.

There maybe times when we wonder how and why our lifestyle turned so overly mechanical and why life is led based on such a conceptual and mathematical approach. Well, it is so only because Man tries to see and search for what he needs outside of himself.

As for the life shown in Myths, it surely doesn't arise from any concept base. It arises from a '*Life Base*'.

And for us to entirely receive Their divine messages it is essential to understand all legendary and mythological characters as energy-evoking signs that hit one beyond conditioned thinking patterns. The inner significance contained in these legends deeply impact, our lives.

This deep impact comes from the guidance of Mythological or mysterious cults as they urge one to follow a visionary quest, having the spirit of a warrior setting off on an adventure and bringing back the message. And then in turn to live on, giving life and vitality to this message by dedicating himself to it and sharing it with his fellow beings, *all by the way of his life*; Walking the quest with openness and the spirit of risking how life chooses to open and further open along the lines of adventure. This awakens our potential to meet challenges as well as our inherent responses towards it, leading to a new amplification of life and awareness by '*abidance as consciousness*'.

Ancient Tradition calls a being that guides one through this sort of a visionary quest as the 'Master'.

The Siddhas are the Masters abiding as '*consciousness that illumines*'. The word Siddha comes from a Tamil term derived from the root word 'Chit' (pure

consciousness), so one that abides as consciousness is called 'Chittar', or Siddhar.

These Tamil Saints or Siddhas are *Immortal Masters, Masters of the Basics!* In the physical dimension or the realm of the ordinary world, these Eternal Masters may not appear to be present, but the Siddhas Masters are beyond all limitations. This may be hard to comprehend but having attained Mastery over the very basis of Existence, They are Immortal and thus ever present. The very essence of Siddhahood is this unique vastness of being 'all pervasive' in every dimension or realm, even the physical.

A Siddha is beyond time, He is ever living.

The words Masters of the BASICS expound Their mastery of play in the Essence of Existence... They live eternally free, spontaneous, in peace and happiness, engaged in the river flow of existence...

These Divine Masters encoded sacred teachings and folded it into a precious Tradition to spread by way of divine poetry. Their verses pertain to obstacles faced by humans, big and small; healing of diseases and more profoundly to imparting the sacred knowledge of the grace litpath to the HOME.

The several documented Works of these compassionate Sages speak of Medicine, Yoga, Inner and External Alchemy, Vastu Sastra, Astrology, Occult Science, Martial Art, Lifestyle and Ethics, Tantric knowledge, Gnana (path of wisdom) etc. I have attempted touching upon most of these throughout the course of the book.

Most importantly, we see what makes these Sages and this ancient sacred art and science of living so unique from others; it rises from the ever existent and prevalent nature of co-relation between Divinity and ongoing human conditions. Therefore, one is to start from wherever he stands!

While listening to occurrences in the lives of the Siddhas at first they appear unbelievable, leaving one bewildered, surprised or even shocked. Or, reading some of the teachings, in the course of the book, might initially bring one to question ones own possibilities, leaving him feeling sore, confronted by the limitations felt within. This at first shuts him off from the realisation of the ubiquity of the spirit. But, later it reveals. All underlying factors in these stories and teachings are purposed for a transcendence of the limitations one is bound by. The unique message hidden in the unconventional and seemingly harsh teachings of the Siddhas is *'don't give up, but transcend'*.

More recently, Alternative healing systems and Eastern spiritual practices have gained great popularity in today's world. There are an abundance of books, articles. We also find several teachers as well as organisations and institutes flooding the market today. So, what sets this book apart from what is already available? The reader is sure to enjoy some exclusivity as I have shared certain

insights, entirely unique to the Siddha system thus far imparted solely by way of oral teachings and have never been seen in print before.

The commonly held opinion of the Siddha system being a medicinal system is not entirely false yet it is not the whole truth. This ancient system holds numerous dimensions of which the medicinal aspect is surely more known and remembered. Along with the medicinal aspects, I have also touched upon the other dimensions to the best of the possibilities held by this book.

Now and then followers from and beyond the native land of this tradition have tried to utilise it to gain a power system of Siddhis (Psychic powers). They failed. They failed because they entirely missed receiving the inherent essence and profound wisdom so unique in itself emanating from the sacred teachings of the Ancient Siddhas. The Tradition remains untouched, uncontaminated - shining purity, glowing wisdom and Truth. Similarly, on a voyage into this tradition one may stumble upon its many colours. Encounters with these colours are merely by-products of the sacred system. One need not permit them to deviate or slow one down. The attitude of absolute humility and a devotional reverence for Truth is the only doorway to receive and imbibe the true essence of these sacred teachings.

The Siddha System being such an immense and multidimensional science it is practically impossible to concise it and its sacred teachings into one work. More so, even several works, books cannot confine this tradition into mere words and it remains as elusive and mysterious as the Masters themselves, who are beyond any form of conceptualisation!

This book has been put together more to inspire a reader towards himself rather than as a study material of ancient science. It offers an open invitation; indicates where you stand now and reminds you of HOME.

In **Section one**, after touching upon the significance of this Tradition, we move onto the *History of Siddha Tradition* and some of the contributions made by the Siddhas. I have put down some select captivating life incidents from the lives of the Sages, some of which I have come to hear of, some which I have read and some that I came to learn of while living in close vicinity of my compassionate teachers.

In **Section Two**, we first deal with *Tatwas*, the fundamental life organising units within the micro as well as macrocosm after which we come to *Man – The Five Elements*. With this we venture into the Hallmarks of Siddha Tradition and then come to read of the Doshams, the bio-regulating forces; ones inborn constitution; and the effect of the balance and imbalance of these forces on ones health, temperament and lifestyle. Following which are the traditions salient principles – the Thathus (seven tissues) and Suvai (the six fundamental tastes).

From here I have chosen to elucidate on some of Their forgotten wisdom and solutions that relates to what we term modern day problems, such as fatal and feared diseases like AIDS, Stress caused by obsessive hasty lifestyles, personality disorders caused by the imbalance of the hemispheres etc. And as one of the concluding parts of section two I have spoken of Siddha Kaya Kalpa.

Next, comes the remarkable significance of the ancient art of Varma, bearing the twin faces - one of the Healing aspect and the other of Martial Art.

Section three carries the Yogic and Tantric dimensions of the Siddha System. It is useful to remember that the underlying ground of the teachings of these Systems have so far remained unique by way of secrecy and cryptic poetry that conceals and protects its sacred essence. Its essence gets imparted and is carried on solely by way of the Oral Lineage - handed from Master to disciple. Further, this chapter also highlights the manner and way the Siddha Yogic system differs from other schools of Yoga. I can boldly say that the practices commonly undertaken under the name of Siddha Path in Tamil Nadu nowadays are not entirely original or authentic techniques. Practices of many different Yogic schools are being followed under its tag. Even within the state of Tamil Nadu, it is now hard to find a genuine Yogic Siddha Master making himself available to the social world.

An authentic and genuine initiation is imperative to pursue the Siddha Yogic or Tantric path. Coming from the ancient lineage, initiation cannot be assumed casually as commonly done today in the form of mantras, rituals or techniques. The genuine initiation is the Master sharing with his disciple the very sap of his living experience that he abides as and his surging inspiration. This way the Master shares no conceptualised theories, but shares Himself. This holds exclusivity of true knowledge and is significant of the rebirth of the disciple.

Following this is a chapter related to Kundalini Crisis dealing in mishaps, pitfalls and the nature of suffering common to intense practitioners who may have ventured unsupervised, uninitiated or lacking the prerequisite inner ground. One must know that if not for some healing grace, crisis such as these endanger both the spiritual as well as the daily aspects of lifestyle. This chapter has been expounded to certain depths out of an in depth knowingness and understanding of the significance of a crisis coming from direct experiences encountered in my earlier years.

Next, we elaborate on various forms of Yogic worship. I often find these to have turned mechanical, ritualistic and devoid of wholesome understanding in today's age. The essential truth behind idol or symbolist worship seems to have been ignored or forgotten. The reader can find detailed descriptions of how the Yogis, through the usage of symbols and myths are guiding us on.

We end the third section speaking of the Tantric world of the Siddhas. Describing the true essence of the Ancient Tantric Siddhas, we also go on to highlight how in today's world, practitioners of this Tantric cult, bend and miss the relevant attitude imperative to wholly receive the gracious Truth. The final pages of this section speak of Power Spots and its significance in ones journey.

Section four is filled with the delightful spirit of the Siddha Masters, explaining why and how they remain hidden and un-revealed to ordinary eyes, and yet how one is able to dwell on the free spirit of these hidden Saints through their divine poetry. Reading the Truth emanating poems itself, serves as great sacred teachings and revelations. The divine poems of the mysterious Siddhas are not merely appealing but are awakenings. They invoke great joy, awe and delightful wonder. The short stories can bring smiles or can leave you bewildered in open-eyed wonder. I have translated these amazing ancient Siddha poems into English for the readers. Reading them leaves us all with the sense of someone having gone on ahead and returned to reveal and share with us meaningful life-shaping experiences.



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The Holy feet of Siddha Bogar
(Found in the Mundanthurai Tiger Forest of
Mahendragiri Mountain Range)

SECTION ONE

HISTORY OF SIDDHAS

THE CRITIC EYE OF THE SIDDHAS

The basic purpose of any science is to bring solutions to human problems. All sciences since even the most ancient times, as a tradition, have been devoted to freeing the human race from obstacles. Obstacles such as disease; discomfort of inhospitable environments; drastic weather conditions; and a multitude of other conditions demanding constant focus on immediate and mundane concerns turning life into a hardship.

But our modern times find science taking a different turn. Our way of relying on technology and mathematical modelling has turned the attention to things that have little or nothing to do with day-to-day concerns of the human race.

Ever wondered what scientists have to say when yet another mass murder occurs?

Ever questioned what modern day scientists put in towards ending warfare or hunger?

Have they contributed anything more than increasing powerful weapons and poisonous chemicals that produce mass saleable crops, which, while destroying the environment benefit a few at the expense of many! Anyone who reads can already see that human suffering has not in the least diminished despite great advances in the fields of mathematical modelling schemes and physics. On the contrary, many scientists seem to be responsible for ensuring human suffering to remain profitable for companies that control the flow of food, drugs and weapons in the world.

Can these dire consequences attributed to today's exaggerated scientific mind that chooses to follow a form of reductionist thinking and believes in tampering with its connection with Mother Nature?

No matter how many pieces an oak tree is divided into even the smallest piece is not an acorn! Likewise, *scientifically, matter is divided into smaller and smaller fragments in hope of finding its origin, which they mistake for life.*

This point of view completely ignores the transformational qualities of nature and life. Yet modern science while following this sort of thinking considers itself larger than Nature and sees Her as something dead and innate almost machine-like; or as raw material to be recombined, consumed, blasted to bits,

exploited or paved over, just to make way for so-called economic growth and development.

By and large, science remains concerned with what it believes it can know but scientists often end up learning more about how much they do not know! Interestingly, the theoretical scientists of the outer fringes of physics are coming closer and closer to the views disclosed by ancient spiritual scientists of civilizations long ignored in history and once barely known to the people of today.

According to the ancient picture, science dealt with crucial and fundamental human problems – the prevention of disease, the extension of the lifespan, the prediction of catastrophic changes in the environment and above all, the spiritual advancement of humanity. *In those times, science and spirituality were never separate activities.* They held the same goal: to serve the human race to live in harmony, with each other and with the forces of environment, both natural and supernatural. Regrettably, little faith in these ancient sciences survives today. And most of what has stayed alive has been altered beyond recognition by growing modern day ideas that are evolving ever since the basis of philosophy became enamoured by the idea that Man is the solitary most important creature of creation and that the entire purpose of nature is to serve the whims of Man.

A careful and nature-centred reading of history easily demonstrates that there came a time in the ancient past when the Gods ceased to become divine forces and became exalted men, while the kings ceased to be human rulers and became living Gods. This marked the beginning of the new way of relating with the Divine; a way that separated humanity from nature instead of re-affirming that Divinity in nature holds humanity as a part of it. And thus ever since nature was demystified and re-invented as an exploitable commodity the history of humanity has been filled with history of war, exploitation, conquest and slavery.

Despite this, we do find some of these ancient Sciences still surviving in certain parts of the world, preserved and protected by more ancient Traditions, even if only in small pieces. There are places where the ancient wisdom survives only in the form of Oral Tradition. But in most places the ancient methods of deciphering and decoding ancient songs, poems and works of art or architecture have been long forgotten – and often, if not forgotten, those who knew this sacred art died without passing the valuable knowledge to the younger generations.

In this regard, the southern section of India stands unique! The ancient spiritual scientists or the 'Yogis' of ancient Tamil Nadu encoded several sacred sciences in forms of poetry that has been passed on both in writing and by oral tradition. These Yogis or *spiritual scientists* are known as the *Tamil Siddhas* and a lot of their sacred teachings still live on in the twilight language of

mystical poetry to this day. But unfortunately, many of their teachings have also been rigorously persecuted.

Their revelations pertaining to the nature of divinity in co-relation with human conditions often differs from the orthodox views of many. Fundamentalist Indians of certain religious cults as well as the invading Muslims and Europeans have no doubt played their part by way of various systematic attempts to eradicate these ancient works. Several unprotected manuscripts have been destroyed; nonetheless, much of the work does still survive.

Due to a lack in the specialised knowledge needed to decipher encrypted information from the cryptic poems, many writings got rejected or ignored as useless by modern scholars. Since the British found it politically convenient to alter history and support the claim of Sanskrit as the original language of Indian culture, the tremendously rich and varied literary works of Tamil Nadu got marginalized. Some of the written teachings of the ancient Siddhas were even banned by the British because of their deathly fear of “occult knowledge” as the writings were not according to their view of the world. This fear was mandated by both their religion and their political goals; and their basic policy towards the colonial natives was to eradicate all trace of ancient or ancestral knowledge and thereby completely wipe out any way-of-being that pre-existed their invasion (unless of course it was an approved version). Their basic goal was to enforce a superior military as well as moral presence, and the latter required the removal of anything that linked people to their ancient past, their relationship with each other, their spiritual beliefs and the land itself. This was because the British knew that a link to ancient knowledge was something their guns could not shoot down; that it was spiritual knowledge; knowledge that gives a person a sense of belonging, a sense of place and purpose. They knew that people aware of this nature of knowledge could not be moulded to suit their immediate economic or military needs.

Through a performance of seemingly miraculous feats, the *Yogis* who followed in the lineages of the ancient Siddhas held the confidence of the people even after the apparent downfall of the ancient culture and through the wars and invasions suffered by the subcontinent. They survived and hid treasures in shrines, caves, wells and other places throughout the domain; and not all of these have been discovered yet. But the number of people with the ability to interpret the twilight language bridging the poems to the body of knowledge is few and it is nothing short of a miracle that any of these teachings survive today at all.

The ancient Siddhas speak of numerous remedies solving basic human problems using everything available in the world for that purpose – every plant, animal or mineral. Their medicinal knowledge remains unsurpassed in the entire world. Our current day problems such as cancer and HIV/AIDS seem identical to their descriptions of certain diseases for which they have also prescribed healing methods and treatments.

According to tradition, knowledge is imparted and rituals are taught through a direct relationship between Master and disciple. This part of tradition and its manner proves most difficult if not impossible for a modern day person. Although special practices are involved, it is not easy to have the grace of finding a genuine Master of this system in this day and age. The opportunity to undertake the study of *Swara Yoga* in modern day India itself is rare as most prefer taking up Arts imported from other countries. The genuine Masters of the spiritual practices of such native systems are harder and harder to find.

An individual needs to be eligible to undertake authentic practices of native traditions. In other words, the person needs to inherently be sensitive, of Satvic body and rebellious spirit with a longing for an unconditioned mind, the cultivation of which is not only hard for modern individuals but also considered out of “style”.

One of the more advanced system revealed by the Ancients is *Vaasi Yoga*. It embraces and then transcends the primary purpose of *Swara Yoga*, freeing the individual from temporary planetary influences. *Vaasi Yoga is the most, supreme science of spiritual alchemy* having its goal nothing short of total liberation from all karmic encumbrances of material existence. *Vaasi yoga* is the system of attaining the “Immortal body”. This alchemical path transforms temporal mundane existence into spiritual and immortal being. The practice demands high discipline, fierce determination, but most imperative is a genuine initiation from the Master, which is not easy to come by these days.

The ancient Tamil Siddhas recognise the world as a place filled with all types of individuals at varying levels of spiritual evolution. They saw people very close to exhausting their Karma and even saw some weighed down by the universe’s reactions to their deeds. Based on this wide vision the compassionate Siddhas revealed arts and sciences of Yoga, medicine, astrology, tantric practices, occultism, astronomy, vastu sastra, alchemy and most importantly they documented the eternal wisdom beyond the comprehension of our known world.





Ancient Siddhas

NAMES OF THE SIDDHAS

Here are some of the Siddhas listed by the names they were popularly known by:

Siva Vakkiyar

Punnakisar

Karuvurar

Sundaranandar

Kamalamuni

Ramadevar

Pampatti Siddhar

Gorakkar

Gnaneshwar

Kaalangi

Macchamuni

Kudambai Siddhar

Idaikattu Siddhar

Agasthiyar

Bogar

Azhukanni Siddhar

Pulasthiyar

Konganavar

Pulipani

Theraiyar

Thirumoolar

Sattaimuni Siddhar

*"They lived in natural caves;
They lived in harmony,
They dined the sacred ambrosia,
They created medicated drugs and oils,
They revealed alchemy of metals;
They binded mercury into beads;
They empowered them and flew in the sky;
They are Siddhas, lived for ever!"*

Gnanavindham - Verse 17, Siddha Kalangi Nathar

HISTORY OF SIDDHA TRADITION

*“What avails you now to be born?
If in a last birth, penance you denied,
The Lord made me, a good birth,
In sweetest Tamil, His glory to expound.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse 81, by Siddha Thirumoolar

The Siddha Tradition, identified with the Tamil speaking land, remains a mystery to practitioners of other native medicinal systems of India; not to speak of those involved in the study of traditional systems of medicine.

The Tamil term ‘Siddha’ actually comes from “Chi”, meaning ‘*Consciousness that illumines*’. So the correct way of saying ‘Siddhar’ is ‘Chittar’: the one who abides as consciousness. Any system or tradition is more of an evolution rather than an overnight invention, so too the traditional Tamil system evolved with the development of mankind. It is the first system to emphasize health as the ideal perfected state of the physical, psychological, social and spiritual components of a human being.

To quote saint Thirumoolar,

*“That which cures physical ailments is medicine;
That which cures psychological ailments is medicine;
That which prevents ailments is medicine;
That which bestows immortality is medicine.”*

The traditional Tamil Siddha system has existed from time immemorial, even before written history. It is very difficult to say exactly when it originated. To understand this we have to first understand the history of Dravidian race, which’s greatest contribution was Tamil: the mother of ascetic languages.

PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD

All historians will accept that the Dravidians are known to be the oldest race in India. When the Aryans came to India in the first millennium B.C., the Dravidians existed even before that time. There is a popular saying in Tamil that says *“Tamils were the race who lived with swords even during the actual formation of the earth”*. The knowledge of metallurgy held by Tamils of ancient times is thus explained.

The geographical condition of the Deccan Plateau stands evidence that human life might have originated in South India. The two primary ways history can be understood are archaeological findings and literature. Other sources are also of help to us in understanding this prehistoric period. Implements from the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods are found in abundance in South India; including the state of Chennai in Tamil Nadu. From excavation results of the Indus Valley civilization, recently renamed as the Harappa civilization, we find it spreads not only throughout the Indus region but elsewhere also, which helps us realize the antiquity of the Dravidians.

The worship of the male God and female Goddess i.e., the Siva-Uma cult is of the Dravidians, and not of the Aryans, who had the Brahma cult. The Siddha tradition is said to have originated from Lord Siva who revealed it to Goddess Uma, His consort, and was prevalent even during Indus civilization period.

*“Thus revealed Sadasivam to Devi.
The Goddess passed it on to Nandhi.
Nandhi exposed it to Dhanvanthri.
Dhanvanthri taught it to Ashwini.
Agasthiyar received the knowledge from him,
To be passed on to Pulasthiyar.
Pulasthiyar conveyed it to Theraiyar.”*

Yugi Chintamani, 800 by Yugimuni Siddhar

Moreover, Dravidians worshipped the humped bull (Nandhi); this practice was pursued even in the Indus. Although detailed archaeological evidences of the various medicinal practices of the Indus Valley people are not yet available, there is evidence causing us to believe in the existence of a medicinal system identical to that of the Dravidians. The horns of deer and antelope were used for medicinal use. Other such substances were coral and Neem tree leaves. Coral is extensively found around the southern coast of present day India. The worship of trees and plants, such as the Pipal tree, Bilva tree and basil, by the Indus people also shows evidence of correlation with Siddha medicine.

VEDIC AGE

Moving on from the prehistoric period to the Vedic age, the oldest of all Vedas i.e. the Rig Veda, would have been written later than 1500 B.C., because it was only during that period that the Aryans, after successfully driving out the original inhabitants, settled into North of India. However, Atharva Veda talks much about occult sciences and treatments by mantras, gems etc and Ayurveda, the science of life, is said to be a subveda of Atharva Veda.

The Siddha medicinal system has three main methods of treatment: Mani, Mantra and Aushadha. Mani means gems, mercury balls; Mantra means

invocatory mystical words; and Aushadha means herbal and mineral medicines. Mystical cures and attributing the cause of disease to demons as mentioned in books of Siddha medicine leads us to understand this was earlier than the Atharva Veda period.

SANGAM PERIOD

(Sangam Academy)

The existence of the three Sangams, its period, and the number of Kings and poets forming each Sangam are a centre of controversy. But the advanced cultural development of the Tamils makes us believe of a highly reputed academy of Tamil literature, culture and science to prevail. It is possible that the Pandya Kings had to change their capitals thrice, due to natural calamities (flood).

The first available work in Tamil, *Tholkappiyam* could be dated to the first millennium B.C. This work is written by Tholkappiyar, whose, Guru is the Siddha Sage Agasthiyar. In the work the author writes, “Says the poet” and “Said my teacher”. This means that the literature written by Sage Agasthiyar, on instruction from Lord Siva, has been lost. In some of the songs written by the Siddhas we see that there had been a city by the name of *Then Madurai* (*Then* meaning south), which would be located near present day ‘Kanya Kumari’ in Southern India. It could be Lemuria, which may have been completely ruined by way of natural calamities. This is typical Indianness, as here in India everything is attributed to the Creator.

Tholkappiyam, the ancient Tamil literary classic, elaborates on life and habits in the five geographical divisions: *Kurinji*, *Mullai*, *Marudham*, *Neidhal* and *Palai*. According to the history of Tamil Nadu, these five geographical distributions are Mediterranean, Alpine and Nordic divisions. *Kurinji* are the hilly regions, identical to Alpine and the first occupation of man was hunting for his survival. Gradually as people learned to domesticate cattle they came down from the hills and wandered in the pastoral areas of the forest, i.e. *Mullai*, which could be equated to Nordic. Here, on seeing wild forest fire erupting due to clashing bamboos man learnt the use of fire. He started cooking food. Again, seeing wild animals consuming herbs during illness, he realized the medicinal value hidden in them. The *Neidhal* lands, near the ocean are equivalent to the Mediterranean. *Marudham* or lands suitable for cultivation is the last place, man went onto live and settle. He realized here how the water from these lands made him prosperous and free from illness. *Palai* refers to sandy desert areas.

Any medicinal system forming and upcoming from a particular area is usually born from the rising concerns of diseases encountered due to those specific climatic conditions. Evidently, it confines the system to that area only. For instance the Arabian Medicinal system, Unani system, is predominantly

concerned with diseases related with heat (Pitta) as the geographical and climatic conditions are mostly of desert region. But, looking at the ancient Siddha traditional system of medicine, we find it covers and considers all expansive possibilities; several diseases and ailments generated from many varying climatic conditions and changes. Such is the vast, unique and ancient knowledge imparted by these “Immortal Masters”.

An ancient work by the name of Purananuru, said to be a Sangam classic, written by ‘Mudinagarayar’, talks about the formation of the five elements.

*“The sandy Earth,
The Ether that covers it,
The Air formed by the Ether,
The primal Fire from the Air,
Its contradictory Water,
From the nature.”*

Silappathikaram, one of the five epics of Tamil literature, hold ample evidence of the high quality medicinal practitioners prevailing during the later period of Sangam. It says there that practitioners of the science of life were highly principled. A poet named Maruthuvan Thamodaranar, ‘Maruthuvan’ in Tamil means physician. This leads us to believe that by this period medicine probably was a separate profession. The council of advisors to the King included a physician representing the medical profession. Titles of some books from Sangam literature are identical to the names of medicines, such as ‘Thirukadugam’, ‘Yelaathy’, and ‘Sirupanchamulam’.

There is historical evidence proving the existence of institutions like hospitals and smaller dispensaries during the Chola kingdom; even in those ancient times, they were in the habit of appointing and staggering staff duties in patterns, which are clearly explained. During the reign of the Chola kings there was a hospital constructed in memory of Sundaram Chola at Tanjore, which held a physician, a pharmacist, an assistant and two female nursing assistants.

According to Dawson’s dictionary on Hindu mythology, the Siddhas are equivalent to the Magis of Europe, i.e. people who have strived for spiritual well being or spiritual perfection to attain the highest goal of life. The Siddhas are said to have been 70,000–80,000 in number. They followed the Agamas, which are Dravidian or Tamil. Even after being aware of the physical body as transient, they honoured it as the only instrument by which a person can attain the ultimate goal: to become one with the Lord. For instance, the practice of yoga, esoteric breathing practices etc., helps one to raise the God within oneself.

‘Siva Vakkiyar’, one of the Siddhars says:
“It’s a waste to make floral offerings;

*And to chant mantras to an idol,
When God is within you;
It's like a vessel, which doesn't realize,
What is there in it?"*

Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal, Verse 521, by Siddha Siva Vakkiyar

The Ancient Seers believe that service to humanity is service to the Lord of Lords. With this view, they founded the system and procedures of medicinal healing. Siddha medicine can be rightly called a by-product of the Siddhas practices to reach the Ultimate. This is the reason why Siddha medicine, though a perfected science, appears to be a mingling of art, philosophy and science.

But it is to be remembered:

*"Science doesn't need mysticism;
And mysticism doesn't need science.
But man needs both".*

To quote Albert Einstein, the Nobel laureate:

*"Science without religion is blind;
And religion without science is lame."*

Even though there are several Siddhas in the Siddha Tradition, a group comprising of 18 Siddhas, are considered significant and are called the "18 Primal Siddhas"

Records in different works of the Siddhas contain varying possibilities of the Primal 18. This difference mainly arose because of a particular practice followed by each; a Siddha, in his own written works would exclude mentioning himself to be one of the 18.

There lies another probability. They were originally only eighteen in number and whomsoever followed their philosophy, experienced it and went on to writing books on an identical line of thinking were also called Siddhars.

Apart from this, there are various classifications, such as "Navanadha Siddhars", "Navakodi Siddhars" etc. Listed below are only four different classifications:

THE FIRST SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

1. Thirumoolar
2. Ramadevar
3. Kumbamuni
4. Idaikadar
5. Dhanvanthri
6. Valmiki
7. Kamalamuni
8. Bhoganadhar
9. Macchamuni
10. Konganavar
11. Padanjali
12. Nandidevar
13. Bothaguru
14. Pampatti Siddhar
15. Sattaimuni
16. Sundaranandadevar
17. Kudhambai Siddhar
18. Gorakkar

THE SECOND SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

1. Gauthama
2. Agasthiyar
3. Sankara
4. Vairava
5. Markandeya
6. Valmiki
7. Romar
8. Busundar
9. Sattaimuni
10. Nandeesar
11. Thirumoolar
12. Kaalangi
13. Macchamuni
14. Pulasthiyar
15. Karuvoorar
16. Bogar
17. Konganavar
18. Pulippani

According to the work Gnanakkovai, the list of Siddhars is altogether different. They are:

1. Siva Vakkiyar
2. Pattinathar

3. Patharagiriyar
4. Pampatti
5. Idaikkattu Siddhar
6. Agapai
7. Kudhambai
8. Kaduveli
9. Thiruvalluvar
10. Sattaimuni
11. Agasthiyar
12. Azhuganni
13. Nandheswarar
14. Ramadevar
15. Karuvoorar
16. Thirumoolar
17. Romarishi
18. Valmiki

NAVANATHA SIDDHAS

1. Sathyanathar
2. Sathoganathar
3. Adhinathar
4. Vegulinathar
5. Anadhinathar
6. Mathonganathar
7. Machendranathar
8. Kalendrannathar
9. Gorakkanathar

It should be kept in mind that the above mentioned Siddhars were the more popular writers and the ones who used the Tamil script. Although all Siddhars haven't contributed to the science of Siddha medicine; all have spoken of philosophical concepts of life - which are the basis for the development of the Siddha system.

There are many different opinions regarding the period of each Siddha. Writers of Tamil history have their own assessment of the ages of the Siddhas. Earlier than the fourth century AD., history has not yet been traced. This is most likely quite true, because the Siddha tradition was handed down orally by way of guru-sishya relationship and no institutions that formally taught. Let us now confine ourselves to speaking of the Siddhars who have made a significant contribution to the art of living.

There are three lineages in the Siddha tradition:

Bala varga: (bala-youth; varga – lineage)

The founder of Bala varga was Lord Murugan; and the first Siddhar was Agasthiyar.

Moola varga:

Thirumoolar was the founder of this lineage. His foremost disciple Kaalanguinathar was of Chinese origin. He was associated with the Taoist tradition. Later when he came to Tamil Nadu he became the disciple of Thirumoolar. Kaalanguinathar went on to be known as the Guru of Bogar.

Kailaya varga:

The founder was Sattaimuni Siddhar.

Other well known Ancient Indian Sages or Great Seers:

Kaga Busundar, Dhanvanthri, Vasishta, Kalai kottu Maharishi (the guru of King Janaka), King Janaka and Padanjali. They have works written in Tamil script explaining the multi-dimensional Siddha system. They are also considered as the ancient Siddhas. Their Tamil works are available even now in book form. The Samadhi shrine of Padanjali, the founder of the Samkya system, is in Rameshwaram, the south east part of Tamil Nadu.



TALES FROM THE IMMORTALS

It was never customary in ancient India to write and record History because, in Truth, one is not bound by time, so for the Timeless Ones how was birth and death to be recorded? Was he born? Did he ever die?

Similar to the sacred texts of these Immortal Masters are their tales and parables. They carry on in poetic verses written and recorded on palm scripts, and via oral lineages or handed down and eagerly heard as common household grandma stories.

A chosen few incidents and tales have been shared here under this chapter. Not only are they inspiring, but shine a special quality that draws you into Their World, the World of the Siddhas, a rebellious world! A world free of rotten rational conditionings - so paradoxical to the dogmatic approaches of today! A world aglow with the health of Life, shining the Spirit of Existence; a world that lives on... even today, every moment...

Most of the ancient Siddhas prefer to live secluded and aloof, camouflaged by the depths of thick forests and mountains peaks; maybe they live and exist only in realms of the invisible, hidden away from our social world. It undoubtedly appears as though they prefer to remain unknown and away from us common folks. But as we try assume this to be true we cannot overlook a simple truth that each and every verse they have sung and written in all the palm scripts are meant as an aid for us, all the arts and sciences revealed and expounded by them through their scripts are all intended for our well being. Every wisdom, every ordinary Truth, anything in relation to our lives, our happiness and suffering, nothing has missed their divine visions, and all of which still proves useful even amidst our ever so modern millennium.

The various dimensions and the rewarding milestones along the Siddha path may shine colourful and may even pull you... but in a nutshell, Their earnest wish is “by first giving you what you want, they pull you over to the ‘other side’”. What can be said about their divine mischief... Their play, Their joy...and above all Their compassion for our upliftment.

AGASTHIYAR

*"To perceive the entire world, is full of wisdom;
To experience all objects, in essence, as infinite plains,
To have a vision of the serene space.
Understand! All these through only one means
- That is Dhyanam!"*



Agasthiyar Soumiya Sagaram I 200, Verse 302

A father figure of Siddha medicine, literature, grammar, and above all of profound wisdom is the revered Siddha Agasthiyar. There are many stories and instances about Siddha Agasthiyar and mythical occurrences in his life could fill a number of books. It has been said that he travelled to the southern tip of India to bring a balance between the North and South, as ordained by Lord Siva...

We have narrated a little information about this great Sage.

"In the ancient times once, Lord Brahma was intensely involved in performing a Yagna (sacrificial fire ritual). Pleased by the Yagna, radiant effulgence emerged from Lord Siva and descending towards the place of the Yagna and entered into the Kumbha Kalasha (the holy pot) placed above the Yagna.

Soon after that a little sage holding a, yoga thandam (holy stick) and kamandala emerged from the Kumbha. The divine beings participating in the Yagna saluted the little sage. The air was filled with chanting. They called him Kumbha Muni or Kalasha Muni.

The little sage with the yoga thandam and the kamandala was ever abiding in his self, as Siva, in the form of the effulgent radiance that emerged from Lord Siva. He is Sage Agasthiyar. In the Tamil language, Sage Agasthiyar is called as Agathisa (Aga + isha), which means Self as Siva.

Sage Agasthiyar performed intense penance for several years, floating on water. Days and days were spent like this. In that very time, arrangements in Mount Kailash had begun for the Holy marriage of Lord Siva with Goddess Parvathi. All devas, sages and divine beings started arriving to Mount Kailash to join the sacred celebrations. The northern part of ancient India got more and more crowded and started dipping low under the weight of their collective presence.

Seeing this, as a part of His Leela, Lord Siva asked Siddha Nandidevar to call upon Sage Agasthiyar. He then ordained Sage Agasthiyar to immediately proceed towards the Southern tip of ancient India, the Pothigai Mountain. This was done to bring back the balance. Hearing he had to leave the side of his Lord and not participate in the wedding

occasion, Sage Agasthiyar grew sad. Completely understanding Sage Agasthiyar's dismay and sorrow Lord Siva said, 'don't worry my son you will have the darshan of my marriage even in the Pothigai Mountains'. Relieved, Sage Agasthiyar happily commenced his holy journey to the south of India."

The above information is mentioned in several ancient epics belonging to both northern and southern spiritual traditions. This incident clearly indicates Sage Agasthiyar's presence to be equivalent to that of the entire world. In other words, he alone is enough to balance the collective presence of devas, sages and divine beings.

There are ever so many adventurous narrations of incidents and encounters in his journey to the southern tip. One such incident says that while on his way, Agasthiyar transformed the Vindhya Mountains, which were towering high up to the sky, into small hills so that it would not block anybody's way.

"Once while walking through a certain area Agasthiyar found many sages hanging upside down in the trees. He asked the reason for their situation and miserable condition. They explained: a sage belonging to our clan of sages has not yet married. And until he doesn't marry, have been cursed to hang upside down like this. They mentioned the name of this sage to be none other than Agasthiyar! Hearing this Agasthiyar felt tremendous compassion and introduced himself to the sages, and assured them that he would marry soon.

The king of Vidharbha had a daughter by the name of Lobhamudra who had both divine grace and celestial beauty as her form and self. Agasthiyar married her. Lobhamudra was the accomplished Woman Siddha of the Sri Chakra Upasana, the peak knowledge of Tantra. She learnt it from her Guru, Hayagreeva, the horse faced Vishnu, in Kancheepuram, situated in Tamil Nadu.

As the holy complimentary of Agasthiyar, she served Sage Agasthiyar with all her heart as does an ideal Rishi Patni (spiritual wife). Agasthiyar, who was till now an ascetic now expressed his artful nature of the spiritual dimension by revealing several Tantric Vidyas' to the world."

Lobhamudra always accompanied Agasthiyar on his journeys.... There is an anecdote of one such time in relation to two Asuras, named Vathapy and Vilvalavan.

"These two Asuras were known to kill ascetics to ensure none got more powerful than themselves. They had the ability to transform their appearance to what they desired. Vilvalavan used to disguise himself in the form of a Brahmin and invite wandering ascetics home for a feast. The second asura, Vathapy would transform himself into

deliciously appetising food. After the unknowing ascetic would eat the offered food, Vilvalavan would shout and call out to Vathapy to come out. Hearing his call Vathapy would tear open the stomach of the ascetic and emerge thereby killing the unsuspecting ascetic.

One day, Agasthiyar happened to be walking in their territory. Noticing a new sage around Vilvalavan as usual disguised himself as a Brahmin and invited Agasthiyar to accept his hospitality. Agasthiyar smiled and accepted. Vathapy by this time disguised himself as appetising food. The food was offered to Sage Agasthiyar. Agasthiyar heartily ate all the food. As soon as he had finished, as usual while looking at Agasthiyar's stomach Vilvalavan called out to Vathapy to emerge. But nothing happened!

Again and again, Vilvalavan called out to Vathapy to come out, but there was no reply and nor did Vathapy come. Vilvalavan, now looked at the sage seated before him and sensed he was no ordinary sage. Agasthiyar spoke, 'Vathapy jeerno bhava', which meant, Vathapy is digested!

Vilvalavan immediately understood and greatly feared Agasthiyar's divine powers. He promptly asked forgiveness for all his actions."

Agasthiyar wrote the work on grammar for the Tamil language by the divine grace of his Guru Lord Murugan.

At the time, 'Kaychina Valuthi' was the king of the Pandya kingdom. The first glorious Tamil Sangam was held in this time. Agasthiyar acted head of the first Tamil assembly and taught the divine significance and literary efficacy of the Tamil language to other poets and grammarians.

'Irayanar Agaporul', is one of the Tamil classics mentioning a natural calamity to have hit the ancient Pandya kingdom and the forty-nine nations around it. Agasthiyar and a few moved little northwards of Tamil Nadu and constructed a new Pandya kingdom with the available resources.

At last, Agasthiyar settled in the Pothigai Mountains where he had the darshan of Lord Siva marrying Goddess Parvathi. He wrote many works related to all the various dimensions of the Siddha Path and had disciples living around him in the mountains.

The great epic *Ramayana* narrates an incident introducing 'Agasthiyar', a divine guest in King Dasaratha's court. Lord Rama receives Siva Gita and Aditya Hridaya from Sage Agasthiyar.

The first book on Tamil grammar, “*Agasthiyam*”(this valuable document does not exist anymore) is said to be written by Agasthiyar during the first Sangam period. Agasthiyar lived in ‘Pothigai Malai’, a hillock in the Western Ghats in Tirunelveli District of southern India while writing his medicinal classics. There is a hut by the name of *Agasthiyar Kudil* found in the forest near *Karaiardam*, where he meditates. Amongst his many disciples, the Siddhas Theraiyar and Pulasthiyar have contributed significantly in the flourishing of the Siddha lineage. Amongst all the different medicinal classics attributed to him, we find classics on ophthalmology, pharmacology, classifications of disease etc. His works on Yoga have been highly valued for clear flowing verses, shining clarity and sharpness of essence.

*“Listen to the miraculous fruits of tapas;
When He is in Siva yoga trance,
Man will find Him as man,
Woman will find Him as woman,
Yogis will find Him as Yogi,
Fiery animals will find Him as their, own;
Thus entangled under His compassionate tapas.”*

Agasthiyar Pari Puranam 1200, Verse 1101
(Tapas means intense penance)

Some of his Works are listed below.

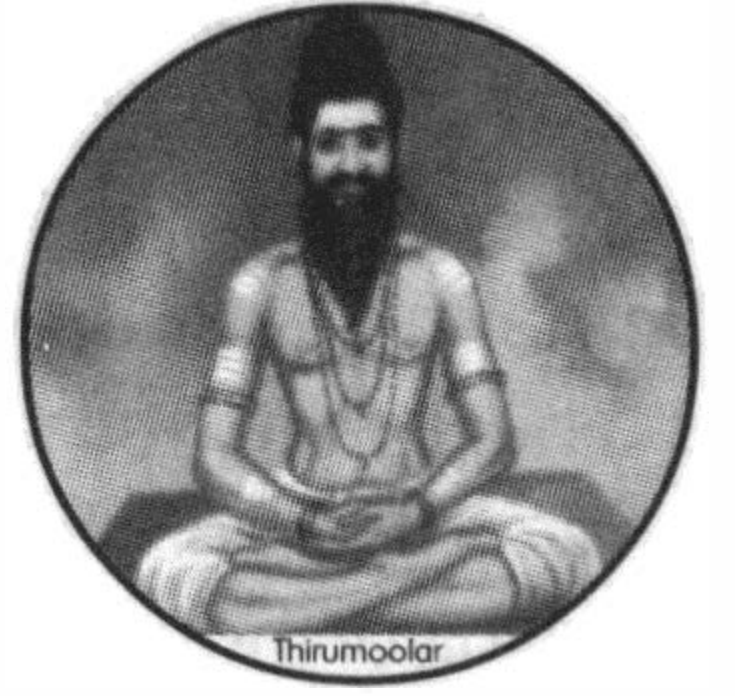
Agasthiya paripoornam - 40
Agasthiya Vaidhiya rathina churukam - 360
Agasthiya Gunavakadam
Agasthiya nayanavidhi
Agasthiya - 21,000
Agasthiya - 12,000

Agasthiya Vaidhiya kaviyam - 1500
Agasthiya Sathaganadi
Agasthiya Muppu Guru Nool
Agasthiya pancha kaviyam
Agasthiya pancha patchi
Agasthiya Vaidhiya kummi



THIRUMOOLAR

Thiru Nandhi Devar is the direct disciple of Lord Siva and Thirumoolar is one of his eight students. Let us see the most significant event in Siddha Thirumoolar's life, the one incident that brought him to us. It also gave him the name Moolar after he entered the mortal frame of Moolan, the herdsman.



“Once, a Sage felt a strong desire to see Agasthiyar Rishi, living in the Pothia hills. So, leaving Kailash, the Sage travelled southwards. On his way, he visited many shrines of Lord Siva.

He came to Thiruvadu thurai. After bathing in the river Kaveri, the Sage entered the temple for the darshan of his beloved Lord Siva. Later, while walking along the banks of the river Kaveri, he noticed a herd of cows shedding tears profusely. Approaching them, he discovered the cause: the herdsman lay dead.

The Sage's heart flowed with compassion and sincerity felt the urge to pacify the grieving cows. With his yogic powers, the Sage hid his own body inside the trunk of a tree and entered the body of the dead herdsman.

The herdsman's body instantly came to life - with the Sage within it! How were cows to know the difference? Seeing their Master alive was more than enough to make the cows rejoice in happiness.

The Sage had entered the body of a herdsman named Moolan, a resident of Sattanur, a nearby village. When evening came, the Sage, still wearing Moolan's body led the cows back into their village. Reaching the cows back to their homes, the Sage noticed Moolan's wife eagerly expecting her husband's return. As usual, she approached him happily, but today she wasn't allowed to come close. Moolan didn't allow her to touch him. He said: “Oh lady, I am not your husband. Adore Lord Siva and attain Liberation.” He turned and left for a nearby Math.

The shocked woman couldn't comprehend what had come over her husband and what was the reason for his strange words and actions. Not knowing any other way, she went and complained to the leaders of the village, describing the puzzling conduct of her husband towards her.

After a brief discussion amongst themselves, the leaders spoke to Moolan. The words uttered by Moolan left them all speechless. The wisdom that shone from the words of Moolan was undeniable and none could refute it. Seeing the series of events, the leaders concluded

that their simple herdsman Moolan had somehow attained great spiritual evolution. They agreed he must be left alone, untroubled. Explaining this to the distraught wife, they urged her to leave Moolan alone.

Early next day, the Sage followed the cows back to their grazing fields in search of his hidden body. He searched and searched everywhere for his body. He knew he had hidden it in a tree just the previous day. But there was no body to be found.

Such is the Lord's Lila - a divine play!!

It was Lord Siva's wish for the Sage to encode many sacred works covering all dimensions of Truth. The moment the Sage realised his Lord's wish he instantly returned to Thiruvadu thurai. There he stayed and worshipped the Lord seated beneath a pipal tree deep in meditation. He remained in Samadhi for three thousand years. Once each year the Sage would emerge from his Samadhi to compose a single verse, after which he would re-enter his samadhi state. This way, in three thousand years, the Sage wrote three thousand verses."

He has mentioned this himself in one of his own verses. This sacred work is called Thirumanthiram. The Sage is Siddha Thirumoolar.

Siddha Thirumoolar wrote other works such as Thirumoolar theetcha vithy, Thirumoolar karpam, Puvanai kakkisam (explaining powerful occult practices) etc

Once, Siddha Thirumoolar, Siddha Padanjali and Siddha Viyagrapathar, together performed penance at the Natarajar Temple at Chidambaram. After some years of being immersed in Yogic experience, all three simultaneously had the cosmic vision of the dance of Lord Natarajar.

After this divine experience, Siddha Thirumoolar instantly disappeared into the space of Siva and mingled his existence into the sanctum of the temple at Chidambaram.

After this rare occurrence, Siddha Padanjali continued to wander throughout south Tamil Nadu; later, he entered into Samadhi in the Temple at Rameshwaram, found in southeast of India. There is no literary record about what became of Siddha Viyagrapathar after this incident.

Siddha Thirumoolar's treatise on the Siddha cult, Thirumanthiram, is a pioneering work. It is empowered to assist even the present-day Siddha seeker to receive proper guidance in the path. The number of written verses flows to a majestic 3000 in number. Thirumanthiram includes songs covering all dimensions of truth; the quantum nature of matter, purity of thought and action, the Astama Siddhis (eight occult powers), Astanga Yoga (eight limbs of

yoga) and Tantric teachings of Siddhas and occult topics. The most treasured verses of the Thirumanthiram are Siddha Thirumoolar's teachings about both, the devotional path as well as the profound aspect of Non-duality. These divine poems also speak the importance of honouring and preserving the physical body, and the ways and means for it.

Thirumanthiram, by Siddha Thirumoolar is an important and highly resourceful work. It has the potential to be approached in the light of modern thinking and discusses the similarities between theoretical physics (quantum theory) and mystical thought. Thirumanthiram expounds upon all the dimensions of the Siddha Tradition.

*“Lord, the Prime is the atom within the atom;
Divide an atom within the atom into a thousand parts.
They who can thus divide and approach the Lord,
He, indeed, is the atom within the atom.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2008, Siddha Thirumoolar

Siddha Thirumoolar had many disciples and his foremost disciple who became the next in lineage is Siddha Kaalanginathar.

Some of Siddha Thirumoolar's books are:

Thirumoolar Vatham 21

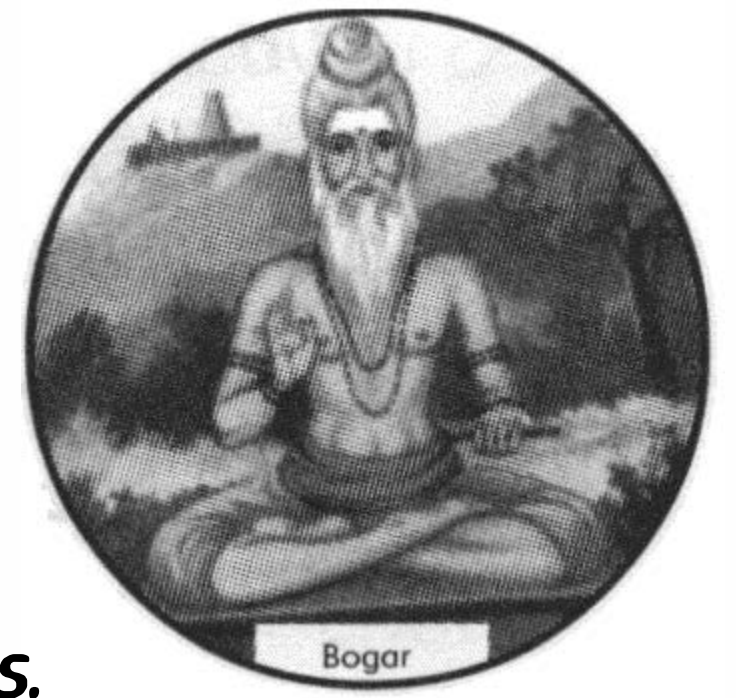
Thirumoolar 608

Thirumoolar Vaidhiya

Thirumoolar Gnanam

Thirumanthira Malai





*“Consuming Elixir pill, I travelled eight sides,
I saw the range of mountains, and,
Saw the glittering plains of Gold mines.
I saw mines abundant with copper ore,
And saw the green-mountain, and range of hills.
I saw wonders at the land of the Chinese.
I saw Mount Kailash and the reddish hills yonder.
I saw the great Meru and Siddha Roma Rishi too.
Acquainted with him, I learnt all secrets;
Then wishing to reveal the secrets of all arts,
Consuming again another Elixir, I flew to china and settled there.”*

Bogar Sapta Kandam-7000, Verse 1243 to 1244, by Siddha Bogar

There are many different stories regarding the native origin of Siddha Bogar. One such story says him to be of Chinese origin and to have travelled through Tamil Nadu and yet another version claims he was the disciple of Siddha Kaalanganthar who was the disciple of Siddha Thirumoolar, and later had travelled to China for a further expansion of knowledge.

The incidents of Siddha Bogar's life written below have been taken from the ancient work Chathura Giri Sthala Puranam.

“In the ancient times a sage and his three disciples, accompanied by a dog were walking through a deep forest area of the Himalayan Mountains. They were all exhausted by their long journey by foot.

At this point, the sage took out an alchemical pill and handed it to one of the disciples. The disciple instantly fell unconscious on consuming the pill. The sage gave one pill to the dog. He too dropped unconscious. Then he gave a pill each to the remaining two disciples.

They had already seen the effect of the pill on the first disciple and the dog. They were afraid to take the pill. Fearing their Guru, they pretended to swallow the pill but secretly threw it away. The sage too consumed a pill and fell down unconscious.

The two disciples were quick to assume their fellow disciple, the dog and their Guru to be dead because of the pill! They decided they had no choice but to cremate the presumably dead bodies. But their severe exhaustion made them decide to first wait awhile and rest.

After a few hours of rest, after they felt stronger and better, they walked to a nearby village to arrange for the cremations. On their return, they were shocked when they couldn't find the bodies. The disciple, the dog and the Guru, were nowhere to be seen. The two disciples stood there perplexed.

Suddenly something far into the distance caught their eye. Looking carefully, they spotted three forms climbing another mountainous terrain. They recognised them to be their Guru, the dog and the disciple!

Instantly they realised what a grave mistake they had committed by disbelieving their Guru and his rejuvenative alchemical pill.”



“Once while walking through a village, this sage saw a woman seated beside her dead husband, crying, overcome with grief. The sage’s heart welled with compassion on seeing her suffering. From this compassion arose in him an intense urge to know the secret ways of resurrecting the dead. With this strong intention in his heart, he went to the Samadhi place of the Navanadha Siddhas and before the samadhi carried out intense Tapas.

One day They appeared before him and asked the reason for his Tapas. He expressed his wish and asked them for blessings. Gravely, they explained to the sage that his desire to help reduce the suffering of people by resurrecting the dead was against Divine Order.

The sage was unrelenting and remained adamant. The Navanadha Siddhas continued to explain, ‘these very people who appear engulfed in grief at the death of their loved ones, will not remain so for very long. They not only forget, but also, easily enough repeat the same mistake of being over indulgent in transitory things’. After explaining the nature of human beings, the Navanadha Siddhas said, ‘as you are being highly adamant and are unable to understand you will lose all the Siddhis that you have attained by intense Tapas.’

On hearing this, the sage replied, ‘if the desire for the well-being of fellow humans is a wrong and punishable offence, then I take death in this moment!’ To this They said, ‘No! You have already attained the knowledge of healing using valuable medicinal preparations. It must not be lost in vain. You are needed to be here so that the Siddha lineage can flourish’.

Thus spoken, the Navanadha Siddhas blessed the sage with the knowledge of KayaKalpa Yoga and Elixir preparations and cautioned him to share it only with a deserving few.



Soon after this, the sage travelled to southern India, lived in the Pothikai Hills of Tamil Nadu and continued his Tapas. On one day, he was walking through a village when his throat felt dry and parched. He was thirsty. So, he approached a hut.

He saw a group of Brahmins performing a Vedic Yagna just outside the hut. The sage requested for a drink of water. Seeing his unkempt and beggar like appearance the Brahmins instantly asked him to leave as he was interrupting a sacred ritual.

Immediately, without hesitation or delay the sage turned and noticed a cat walking nearby. Picking it up, he recited some Vedic chants into the cat's right ear. Then he let it go. The cat walked up to the Brahmins, stood before them and began reciting the Vedic chants. Realising their error in recognising the genuinity of the sage the Brahmins instantly asked forgiveness for their foolish and blinding arrogance."

This great Siddha, so flowing with compassion for the suffering of all people is Siddha Bogar.

"After Siddha Bogar attained true knowledge of the KayaKalpa alchemical elixir, he decided to prepare it for the Siddhas down the lineage as well as for the benefit of suffering people. For this, he required high quality mercury. Consuming a specially formulated bead called 'Gagan Guliga' (Sky pill), Siddha Bogar travelled by air all the way to Rome - to the 'well of mercury'. On reaching the 'well of mercury', he saw it was surrounded and guarded by invisible demons. He approached the well but when he tried to take some mercury from the well, it at once pulled away from him. He tried a few more times and each time the mercury would strangely enough slip away. Finally, Siddha Bogar offered a prayer to his Guru's Guru, Siddha Thirumoolar. He tried once again and this time he was successful in taking the mercury he needed.

As He turned to leave, the invisible demons suddenly appeared and stopped him, preventing him from leaving with the mercury. Siddha Bogar spoke to the demons about himself and explained that he belonged to the lineage of the great Siddha Thirumoolar and that his intention behind taking the mercury was to use it for a beneficial purpose. Even after this, the demons expressed doubts and wanted Bogar to prove him self as a great Siddha.

Very calmly, Siddha Bogar went to a nearby ocean and threw in a magical pill. Instantly the pill began to drink the water in the ocean and grow in size. Fearing the ocean would go dry and they would be held answerable to their Lord, the demons pleaded to Siddha Bogar to bring the ocean water back.

The great Siddha obliged."

There are innumerable incidents describing and glorifying Siddha Bogar's mystical Masteries of his sacred Siddhahood.

He even had the skill of binding the Navapashana (nine poisonous metals) into a solid mass, which shows his mastery over alchemy. Siddha Pulippani is said to be Siddha Bogar's student. Siddha Bogar's contribution to pharmacology is also very great. Most of his treatises are in this branch of Siddha medicine. A few books written in the later ages have also been attributed to him.

In the Southern most part of India, nearly 250 kilometres from Madurai city, there is a tiger forest called, Mundanthurai. It is situated in the Mahendragiri Mountain ranges. In the depths of this forest, there is Altar called Bogar Bidam. It is where he had Darshan of Lord Murugan in the form of light in his meditations.

Various secret herbs are collected from this place for the preparation of the Navapashana Statue. Even to this day, this place is not easily accessible to ordinary people and remains a clandestine and mystical spot. On and around this spot and Alter we can find the sacred footprints of Siddhar Bogar.

I would like to share that from my own practical experience the medicinal formulations revealed by Siddhar Bogar have been the most successful in curing ailments even to this date.

*"The pranic current through the left; the fire of moon;
The pranic current through the right; the fire of sun;
The current in the middle is the fire of Kundalini.
Coalition of these three fires that is Salvation!"*

Bogar Gnana Sagaram -100, Verse 36

Some of His books are:

Bogar - 7000
Bogar Karpam - 30
Bogar sarakkuvaipu - 800
Bogar vasiyokam
Bogar Ponnuci
Bogar gnana Sagaram
Bogar Varma sutram
Bogar pancha patchi sastram
Bogar Vaidhiya Thirattu -700
Bogar Janana Sagaram
Bogar - 12000

The use of synthetic drugs was not unknown to Siddhars. Of these books: Bogar Sarakku Vaipu is dealing with the manufacture of synthetic drugs, in absence of natural products for preparing medicine.

Bogar Karpam deals at length with means of preserving the body and the science of elixir.

Bogar Vaasi Yogam deals with primordial breathing and inner alchemical practices.

Siddha Bogar has extensively written on the pharmacological and therapeutic aspects of metals and minerals. His text, Bogar 7000 contains the above stated information. In this, Siddha Bogar talks of the different methods of preparing Navapashana and mentions other various types of distillation processes in this ancient classic. This text consists of seven volumes.

Bogar Karpam 300 discusses the rejuvenating properties of herbs and minerals. Siddha Bogar also reveals methods of producing a black-coloured variety of the desired herb from the normal variety, in the process of growing Kalpa plants.

Bogar Nigantu 1700 enlists a number of names attributed to the drugs of herbal plants. It lists around 570 herbal plants; animal drugs and minerals, which in different parts of Tamil Nadu are known by around 5000 different names.

Bogar Karpam is about longevity and the preparation of medicines for it (Kaya Kalpa).

Bogar Gnana Sagaram is about Creation.

Bogar Gnanam 100 speaks of Wisdom through Yogic practices.

Bogar Vaidhyam 700 is about Siddha medicines for diseases.

Bogar 12,000 includes all dimensions of the Siddha Tradition (This is not available in the market).

Bogar Pancha Patchi is on astrology and occultism.

The place of Siddha Bogar's Maha Samadhi shrine is in Palani Hill, behind the Navapashana (Nava means Nine and Pashana means poison) statue of Lord Murugan.



*“Great Siddha, deliverer of many scripts, is Theraiyar.
A rare son of Great Sage Agasthiyar,
A ‘flawless’ in the clan of Brahmam,
His Attainment of Kaya Siddhi is an amazing one!”*

Siddha Karuvurar Vatha Kaviyam



Siddha Theraiyar's history is also not without mythological background. He is said to have performed a craniotomy to remove a kind of growth or mass from the brain.

Although he is not included among the 18 Siddhars, his contribution towards diagnosis and treatments in the path of Siddha medicine is much greater than many of the known eighteen Siddhars. A few of his books are written in a high grammatical language, while another set of books are written in very simple language. It is probable that two different persons may have composed these verses.

There is reason to believe that he lived during the twelfth century A.D., because his medical classic Therar Maruthuva Bharatham is based on the great Epic Mahabharatha. Therar Neekuri is a book, which deals at length with urine examination for diagnostic and prognostic purposes.

Therai (in Tamil) means toad – a small frog-like creature living among stones. There is an interesting story about how Theraiyar got this name.

“Once, a king had an unbearable headache. Sensing the cause to be a tumour-like mass, Siddha Agasthiyar performed brain surgery. Inside the king's skull, he found seated within the brain a tiny toad – perhaps it had grown there, from a small egg! Completely bewildered, Agasthiyar wondered what to do?

Theraiyar was still a learner in the Siddha Tradition but much to everyone's surprise Theraiyar at once grasped the situation. Using his presence of mind, he said: ‘Sprinkle water, it will react only to water’.

So, Theraiyar sprinkled water from a pot onto the tiny creature. Feeling the sensation of water, the toad instantly jumped out from inside the King's brain.

Siddha Agasthiyar highly appreciated Theraiyar's presence of mind and gave him the name ‘Theraiyar’.

There is yet another story about how Theraiyar got his name:

“For a long time, Theraiyar meditated deep inside a cave without food and breath, similar to how a toad hides between rocks or a

bear enters into a cave to hibernate. He was probably given the name Theraiyar because of his Yogic Tapas and meditation bearing similarity to the behaviour of a toad.”

Theraiyar Neerkuri-Neikuri is a book, which deals at length with urine examination for diagnostic and prognostic purposes.

Theraiyar Thaila Varga Churukam is a treatise on the preparation of oil-based drugs used internally and externally.

Other books attributed to him are:

Nadakkam

Anthathi

Yamaha venba

Karisa

Sikichaikiramam

Marunthalavai (Medical logics)

Gunapada venba

Pathartha gunam

Sikkamani venba





Before we begin to speak of Siddha Gorakkar, we first speak of His Guru, Siddha Machendranath, a wandering Siddha and how he came to be so under the direct benediction of none other than Lord Siva.

“One day Lord Siva, seated by the seashore was imparting the sacred knowledge of Swara Yoga to His consort Goddess Parvathi. After some time, Goddess Parvathi started to succumb to sleep. But Lord Siva continued imparting the valuable teachings.

At that very time, in the ocean was an avid listener. A fish, completely absorbed was listening to the Lord’s sacred words. Listening to the graceful words of Lord Siva the fish transformed into human form.

In his new form, he began walking humbly towards the Lord. Seeing him, Lord Siva showered his grace on him and blessed him with the knowledge of the teachings. The Lord declared he would become a great Siddhar. This Siddha is none other than Siddha Machendranath.

As ordained by Lord Siva, Siddha Machendranath became a wandering Siddha, begging for his food, never staying at one place for a long time. Once while passing through a village he approached a small hut to beg food. A woman emerged from the hut and promptly offered him food. Seeing the woman, Siddha Machendranath felt the grief and sorrow she carried in her heart. He asked the reason for her heavy heart. She confessed her sorrow was because she was childless. Out of his compassion, Siddha Machendranath manifested some Vibhuti (sacred ash) and handed it to her, instructing her to swallow it. Blessing her with a child soon, he left.

But, doubting the genuinity of the holy blessing and fearing him to be a magic man the woman couldn’t find the courage to have the vibhuti as instructed. Instead, she threw it into the ashes of the burning place behind her kitchen.

Years went by.

Once again, Siddha Machendranath returned to the village and stood before the same hut. He called out and asked the woman to bring the child. She fearfully confessed she hadn’t consumed the vibhuti. He asked what she had done with it instead.

Pointing to a place behind the house, she explained to have thrown it into the gathered burnt ashes.

To her utmost surprise Siddha Machendranath, was not at all disturbed by this. Instead, he turned and walked up to the pile of ashes and called out “Gorakkar! Get up and come!”

Miraculously, from amidst the ashes walks out a very young boy!”

This boy is whom we know as Siddhar Gorakkar - The great Alchemist.

I would like to share here -
“The Siddha’s Words Never Fail”

An expert in the natural system of medicine of herbs and metals, Siddha Gorakkar was the first Siddha to use cannabis (“ganja”) as medicine, after detoxifying it. This herbal “ganja” (cannabis), as we commonly call it, is originally known as “Gorakkar Mooli”; many of Gorakkar’s medicines have been prepared with this herb.

Some of these medicines have a long and indestructible life of many years. These were prepared and preserved by him in a place named ‘Gorakkar Gundam’ in Kolli Hills where he has been known to live in his later years.

He is said to still reside there, living invisible to the eyes of the ordinary world.

Gorakkar Gundam is a place concealed by an underground hill, covered under natural protection. Only those having divine blessings can reach this place and see Siddhar Gorakkar, yet present there in Yogic Samadhi. Even now, spiritual people going around the Gundam are graced by his divine blessings.

Different treasures remain hidden in secret places in the Gundam. Many palm leaf manuscripts written by him are yet preserved there. He has written a number of books under the Siddha system of subjects of Medicine, Yoga, Alchemy, Astronomical Science, Literature and Astrology. Everything is preserved there in the Gundam in the Kolli Hills.

Siddha Gorakkar has many Samadhi places of worship. One of them is situated in Gorakhpur (in Madhya Pradesh) and another one is located 35 kilometres from Madurai. It is called Tirupuvannam. Siddha Gorakkar is said to have accomplished the peak of Alchemy in the ancient Siva temple located there. His body transformed into Gold. Close to this Siva temple is a temple called Adi Gorakkinath where Siddha Gorakkar’s Samadhi shrine is worshipped.

*“The house of our soul, the body, belongs to us;
So, I am declaring openly to you.
Every country has its own God;
The world’s animation is ruled, by an air-like pulsation;
And the millions of names representing God, represent this pulsation only.
Without this pulsation, the cosmos will just perish itself!”*

Gorakkar Chandra Regai

Only a few of his books have come into the world. Written on palm leaves, they speak of medicine, alchemy and yogic knowledge.

Some of these books are:

Gorakkar Chandra Regai

Gorakkar Ravimeghalai

Gorakkar Muttharam

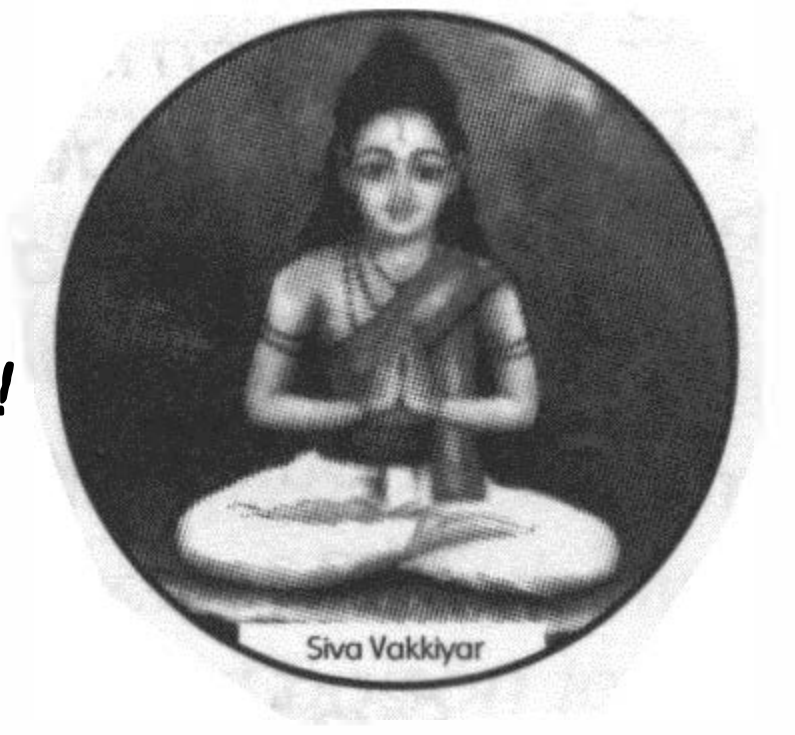
Gorakkar Namanasa thiravukol

Gorakkar Malai Vagaddam

Patients undergoing treatment may also pray to Siddha Gorakkar, requesting they may be well soon. One can also chant a specific mantra to receive Siddha Gorakkar's blessings.



*“That which is I; That which is evil;
That which is in between
That which is distorted; That who is Guru - O fools, tell me!
That which is creation; That which destruction, is;
That which is the Beyond of Beyond
The Nama that gave birth,
Is Rama! Rama! Rama!”*



Poems of Siva Vakkiyar, Verse 13

“Right from his early years, Siva Vakkiyar learnt Vedantic tradition and ritualistic ceremonies from his Gurukula teacher, but his inner search remained thirsty and seeking. So, as soon as he was of age, he left everything and took to wandering in search of his Guru.

He reached Banaras. There he heard of a cobbler with an unheard of skill. He could stitch shoes by merely looking at the person's feet. He needed no measurements. Siva Vakkiyar wished to meet this cobbler.

Seeing the cobbler, strongly drawn towards him Siva Vakkiyar went and sat close by. The cobbler turned to Siva Vakkiyar and asked, 'what do you want?' Siva Vakkiyar expressed his wish, 'To know the path of Gnana.'

The cobbler glanced at him but said nothing. Deciding to first verify the ripeness in the fire of his quest, the cobbler removed some coins from his bag and handed them to Siva Vakkiyar. He told him, 'give these coins to my Sister Ganga.' Then the cobbler asked Siva Vakkiyar to do something strange. He gave him a bitter species of Bottle gourd and told him, 'wash it enough to clean away the bitterness.'

Siva Vakkiyar accepted these things without question and left. He first chose to wash the bitter bottle gourd in the river Ganga nearby. As he was washing, two hands emerged from the river. He placed the coins in the outstretched palms most naturally. Siva Vakkiyar returned to the cobbler.

This time the cobbler playfully said, 'my sister Ganga is highly diplomatic and won't keep the money', and handed Siva Vakkiyar a leather water flask. When Siva Vakkiyar opened the water flask, two tiny hands emerged and returned the coins to him. Siva Vakkiyar in turn returned these coins to the cobbler.

Siva Vakkiyar never showed any sign of surprise or shock all through the series of strange occurrences. Based on this nature the cobbler agreed to share the secrets of Truth with him.

The cobbler's yogic visions had already revealed Siva Vakkiyar had experienced haripurations when touched by the tiny feminine hands.

So, even though the cobbler shared the Upadesha with Siva Vakkiyar he also gave him instructions. Handing him a bitter bottle gourd and a bag of sand, he asked Siva Vakkiyar to wander until he finds a woman who can cook these two things for him. She is the one he should marry. This would remove any Vasanas that remained within him.

Siva Vakkiyar accepted and took to wandering. He did his penance. Wherever he wandered, people were naturally drawn to him. Some would salute him, whereas sometimes women were attracted to him. But, when he would put forward the condition that they first have to cook the bitter bottle gourd and sand for him they thought him crazy and left.

One day during his hours of wandering, he felt very hungry. He saw a tribal group staying nearby. In one of the huts lived a young woman, who came and asked him what he would like to have. Siva Vakkiyar expressed his hunger and asked for her parents. But, she explained they had gone to the forest to cut bamboos. Instead, she offered to give him whatever he needed. This time, Siva Vakkiyar, handed her the sand and the bitter bottle gourd and asked whether she would cook it for him. Innocently she accepted.

As she emptied the sand into boiling water, it miraculously turned into rice and when she added the bottle gourd to it, it turned into curry. When she offered him the cooked food Siva Vakkiyar instantly realised she was the one he was to marry.

Just then, the young woman's parents returned and seeing a Yogi in their hut, respectfully saluted him. Siva Vakkiyar expressed his wish to marry their daughter, as she was gracious and suitable to look after him during his years of penance. The parents were grateful and accepted his proposal for marriage. The two were happily married.

Years passed. Siva Vakkiyar performed penance, but would also go to the forest to cut bamboos. He would use it to make cane baskets. One day, when he cut open one bamboo out flew gold dust. He reeled back in sheer surprise and shock.

He called out to Lord Siva and asked why He was showing him the Lord of Yama when he has undertaken penance for eternal bliss. Hearing his loud cry four people came running and gathered around. They enquired what had happened. Siva Vakkiyar explained he had been engrossed in cutting bamboo and how Lord of Yama had come there.

The four people turned to look to where he pointed and saw gold

everywhere. They whispered amongst themselves about how Siva Vakkiyar was calling gold the Lord of Yama. They assumed him crazy and unfit to live in the world. The four people quickly gathered everything in two bags and left to return to their huts.

Since all had worked hard that day, they were hungry. Two of them offered to go and bring some food for all four of them. Before the two returned with the food, they secretly planned to add poison to the food, as both were greedy to have the gold for themselves without sharing it with the other two.

According to plan, they served out the poisoned food. The two eating people asked for a drink of water and just as the two who had brought the food went to draw water from the well, the other two people rushed up behind them and pushed them in.

They gleefully returned to eat the food. But, alas, they too were dead soon!

Next morning as usual Siva Vakkiyar came walking down the path to go to cut his bamboo. He found two bodies in the well and two bodies on land. He proclaimed, 'for sure it is the Lord of Yama!'



Some time later one day, Siva Vakkiyar sat outside his hut weaving a cane basket. Above, Siddha Konganavar was flying by in the sky, when he sensed powerful vibrations of devotion and penance coming from Siva Vakkiyar. Siddha Konganavar descended. Both instantly recognised each other and exchanged a few words. But, Siddha Konganavar secretly wondered why Siva Vakkiyar lived suffering such ordinariness even after knowing the secret of alchemy.

Siva Vakkiyar left, as it was time for him to proceed to the forest and bring more bamboo. At this time, Konganavar approached Siva Vakkiyar's hut and called out to his wife. He asked if she had any iron rods. If so, she should bring them. She did so. Siddha Konganavar threw some things over it and it transformed into gold.

After this miraculous feat, he left.

On Siva Vakkiyar's return, his wife showed him the gold. He instantly ordered her to throw it into the nearby pond. After she had left to do so it suddenly occurred to him that maybe it was his wife who may have desired for gold and asked it from Konganavar.

He decided to verify his thoughts. Walking out he urinated on a stone outside the hut. When his wife returned, he asked her to bring some water and pour it over the stone. She did so. Fumes of smoke arose

from the rock. After the smoke had dispersed, she saw the stone had turned to gold.

Siva Vakkiyar said if she wanted gold she could have it. She calmly replied, 'to make something external into gold, one must first have gold within, and the gold within you is your love for me which is more than enough for me'!"

Throughout his life, Siva Vakkiyar had seen people's cravings towards material gold. He saw them suffering in their conditioned livingness, not realising the futility of this pursuit or even the futility of acquiring spiritual knowledge. Ultimately, he resorted to writing his famous work, Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal - 1000 verses.

His sacred poems shine his rebellious spirit soaring against the limiting nature of social conditioning. In His songs, he sings his preference for people to work hard for their livelihood and abstain from falling prey to greediness. Siva Vakkiyar has also most divinely expressed the secret dimensions of Yoga, in these songs. Another work by him called Nadi Pariksha, deals with the nature of pulse within the human body and the various methods of diagnosing different pulses related to different ailments. Reading his poems, one can feel his powerful presence calling and inspiring each one towards the Siddha path of Truth realisation.

*"I had not known the One that was in me;
Having known the One that was in me;
Who can see the One that was in me?
By being in myself, I realised."*

Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal, Verse 7

He cryptically sings of Internal Alchemy...

*"In the base, Reeds grown in the pond;
If you arise early morn, cut four bundles,
The aged turn young and be Para Brahmam,
All by their gracious feet, the Blue throated One Siva, and Sakthi,
True! True! True!"*

Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal, Verse 155, by Siddha Siva Vakkiyar

Some of His available works are:

Nadi Pariksha

Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal - 1000



YUGIMUNI

MahaMuni Bogar has furnished some interesting details in his 7000 poems, 4th volume, poem 622 to 633, and Volume 6, poem no. 444.

Says Bogar, *“Yugimuni was one among the greatest Siddhas; living for many years enjoying family life. He was the Guru of Jamathakni Rishi and Thiranagni Rishi. My respectable Guru Kaalaginathar has narrated to this humble servant about Yugimuni’s greatness...*

“Yugimuni travelled the south, along the ‘Panri Malai’ hills, in search of the herbal riches of the hills and mountains. Once, walking in the thick of a deep forest across his path lay a stone pillar. Choosing this spot for meditation, Yugimuni remained seated there, deeply immersed in trance.

Suddenly one day, while still in trance he was frightened by the great tremor of a thunderous sound. Yugimuni sat there stunned and motionless.

Before him appeared a great column of light; stretching to enormous heights, surpassing the limits of the sky above him; a column of light that seemed indescribable and incomprehensible to human eyes. The thunderous tremor as the light appeared seemed to be powerful enough to have affected the entire universe, the planets and stars in the cosmos. Dumbfounded at the magnanimity and overwhelming power he felt radiating from the column, Yugimuni fell prostrate.

When he opened his eyes, he saw the Great Sri Sambara Sage, standing before him in his light body. Yugimuni reverentially touched the holy feet of this great Siddha Yogi and prayed for the teachings of the uniqueness of ‘Vaasi Yoga’. Pleased by Yugimuni, Sri Sambara Sage revealed to him the significance and the secret dimensions of Vaasi Yoga. He then advised Yugimuni to remain close to his Samadhi place and saying thus Sri Sambara entered into Samadhi right there. Yugimuni continued to stay there for many years.

At last, he too wished to enter into Samadhi, but before doing so, he engraved on a stone the signs that would manifest right before he re-emerged from his Samadhi. He said his return would be at a time of pre-dawn, a mixture of day and night. Yugimuni remained in the state of Samadhi for many years.

After many years, with a thundering sound, Yugimuni re-emerged from Samadhi. Yugimuni’s body even after so many years of Samadhi hadn’t degenerated at all. His hair had grown long like the hanging roots of the Banyan tree, in his prolonged state of trance.

Yugimuni now lived in the world, living a miraculous life, giving darshan to many devotees. He was a supreme teacher as he had acquired all the knowledge of the ancient treatises and experienced many secret dimensions of Alchemy, medicine and Yoga.

Yugimuni held a great love for my Guru, Kaalanginathar..."

...Thus, spoke Siddha Bogar of Siddha Yugimuni in his divine verses.

Siddha Yugimuni's classification of disease pathology is the primary one followed even today by Siddha physicians. His classifications of disease are so extensive and so very clear, that they cannot be compared to the present-day classifications of disease in modern day medicine. Until his time, classification of diseases was based only on the three Doshams. But, Siddha Yugimuni was the first to classify disease according to clinical signs and symptoms. Based upon Their sound theoretical knowledge and experience, Siddha Yugimuni and Siddha Theraiyar wrote classics on clinical medicine. The insights and experiences of Yugimuni are astonishing. He has even described neoplastic growths of organs, such as rectum and prostate.

*"Churn the ocean and extract elixir from it;
Mix the salt of Siva, the ruler of destiny;
Purify and amalgamate mercury from its seven impure covers;
If cant, you proud alchemists, will be got by the final sleep!"*

Yugimuni Madhi Venba, by Siddha Yugimuni

Even his work on the subject of external alchemy is highly appreciated to date.

Some of His different classics are:

Yugi Chintamani
Yugi vadakaviyam
Yugi Karisal
Yugi Vaidhiya Ula
Puranam – 100
Vatha Vaidhiya vilakam
Yugimuni Tattwa Gnanam
Yugimuni Madhi Venba



“Pampatti Siddhar in his earlier days was a simple snake charmer. Once, while looking for snakes in a nearby forest he came upon an unusually large snake hill. Thinking there is a large snake within it also meant finding a ‘ratna’ (gem). Eagerly, he inserted his hand into the snake hole.



To his surprise, he felt a strong current in his hand. He fearfully withdrew his hand and retreated some steps. Most unexpectedly, right before his very eyes the snake hill vanished and sat before him a holy sage.

The sage enquired asked why he was disturbing the snakes. To this Pampatti explained he was a snake charmer and that snakes were his means of earning a livelihood.

The sage patiently explained how the snake species was a cursed one and he shouldn't be disturbing them.

The sage then asked him a question, ‘do snakes exist only outside?’ He urged Pampatti to capture the snake within himself.

The words of the Sage struck Pampatti at the very core of his being making him unbearably curious about what the Sage had indicated. Seeing his awakened curiosity, the Sage blessed him by touch and thus began Pampatti's journey into the path of Siddhas.”

This Sage was none other than Sattaimuni.

Pampatti Siddhar is believed to have been an expert in toxicology and mystic cures, but none of his books on these topics are presently available to us. Nagamuni, yet another name for this Siddhar has also written a detailed classic on ophthalmology and diseases of the head.

*“WE make a pillar appear like a small stick,
WE make a small stick appear like a huge pillar,
WE change a man into woman, and woman into man...
Throwing the eight mountains, lifting them like a ball,
Drinking and burping all the seven Oceans,
Bending skies like an archer,
Transforming the three worlds into pure Gold,
Swimming through the blazing Fire,*

*WE change the burning sunshine into cool moonlight,
WE ruin and destroy all, this big world,
WE create new creatures like those made by God,
WE live on equal footing to the Lord of Lords...*

*WE subdue the fiery tiger, elephant, Yali, to make them serve,
WE make the magnanimous God, to play with US.*

O snake dance! Declaring all this, WE playfully do!"

Poems of Pampatti Siddhar, Verses 28-34

Some of His books are:

Nagamuni nayanavidhi
Siraroka vithy
Pampatti Siddhar Padalgal



"In the ancient times, when the demons and gods churned the grand ocean with great enthusiasm came forth from it...

The Divine Cow, Kamadhenu, which the sages took possession of.

Then emerged from it, the white horse called Uchchaisrava, whom the King Mahabali took possession of.

What ensued next was the moon-white elephant Airavatha of four tusks. The Celestial King, Indra, took possession of it.

Then to the surface arose the red Kousthubha Jewel, which was accepted by Lord Vishnu.

After this, emerged the wish-yielding tree of Parijata. This was planted into Indra's paradise.

And then came forth the Celestial Nymphs, the Apsaras.

Now arose, Goddess Lakshmi. Indra gave her an excellent seat. Rivers offered Her in pots their pure water; the earth offered Her herbs and flowers; She was given, ablutions by the Rishis. The presiding deity of the ocean presented Her with yellow silks and a garland. Lord Brahma offered a Lotus flower and Goddess Saraswathi offered Her a necklace of pearls.

Holding a garland of lotus flowers Goddess Lakshmi went around searching a suitable match. She found some defect or another in all those who were assembled there. Some had asceticism but had not full control over anger. Some were wise, but yet not free from attachment; some had heroism but had not yet conquered concupiscence; some had in them righteousness but not the love for fellow beings; and then some had renunciation but that was not conducive to final beatitude. There was prowess in some but were short lived; some were perpetual celibates; and some had a long life but no amiability towards women; and yet some had a long life as well as amiability but was too inauspicious in outward conduct. Deliberating thus, Maha Lakshmi chose for Her husband Lord Vishnu and placed the wreath of Lotus flowers around his neck. He accepted Her even though he had no interest in Her and placed Her on His chest.

After this, appeared Goddess Vaaruni, who presides over Wine. The demons caught hold of her, with the approval of Lord Vishnu.



And then, emerged, a wonderful person, all clad in yellow robes, with a broad chest, earrings; adorned with all kinds of ornaments, charming in every limb. In his hands, he carried a pot of nectar. He was a part manifestation of Lord Vishnu or Lord Krishna called, Siddha Dhanvanthri.”

He revealed the knowledge of Ayurveda.

A few books written by Dhanvanthri are available in Tamil. One among them is on pulse diagnosis, a unique specialty of Siddha medicine. His samadhi is found in Vaideeswararn temple near Tanjore, in Tamil Nadu.

His other works are:

Dhanvanthri Thylam – 500

Dhanvanthri Vaidhiya Kaviyam

Dhanvanthri Vaidhya - 200

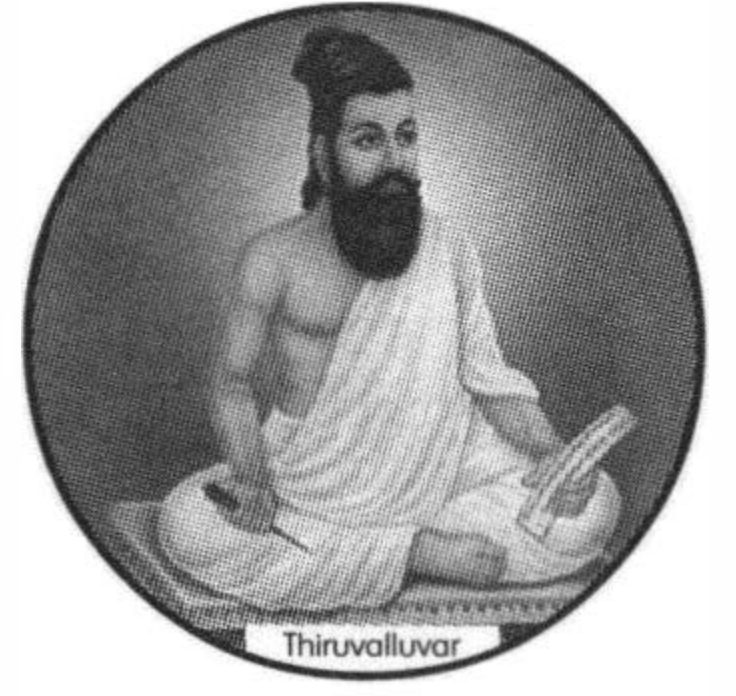
Dhanvanthri Nigantu - 800

Dhanvanthri Vaidya Thirattu - 1000



THIRUVALLUVAR

Saint Thiruvalluvar has written the Tamil Veda Thirukkural. In this work, we find ten couplets on disease and its treatment and dietary habits for good health and life regimen. Siddha Thiruvalluvar emphasises the necessity of understanding the causative factors of any disease for its cure.



He wrote:

*“Noi Nadi Noi mudal nadi athu thannikum
Vai nadi vaippa cheyal”*

“Find the disease, its cause and the right way to cure it”.

He explains how the cooperation of the physician, the pharmacist, the patient and the drug are all very vital for the healing and treatment of any disease.

He also describes diseases to be caused by an imbalance of the three humors: Vatham, Pittam and Kapham. (We have approached these in detail later in the book).

He has written Gnanaveetiyan; also, Thiruvalluvar's Nayanar Karpa vithi, a treatise on the science of elixirs for longevity and Immortality. In that book, they mention the use of one hundred and eight herbs in Kaya Kalpa as rejuvenating medicine.

*“Searching elixir for the body,
No need to wander around forests and mountains,
The ever-lasting elixir is within you.
It has grown, the fools without knowing it,
Continuously ate leaves and died.
Oh! If you search in my works,
The unobtainable elixir will reach you,
So worship and understand my work Gurunool-50”*

Thiruvalluvar Kalpam - 300

Apart from the above, very many have contributed for the development of Siddha medicine. Since Their writings are still in the form of manuscripts or palm scripts and yet to be compiled, they lay in forms of hidden treasures. Many other Siddhars have expounded the oneness with God - their ultimate goal in life. It will not be wrong to say that traditional Siddha medicine is a by-product of the Siddhars' search for reaching God. They firmly believe the physical body to be an instrument to attain Mukthi.





Kagabusundar Sribahuladevi

KAGA BUSUNDAR MAHARISHI

Many different life stories about Kaga Busundar are found in Vedic lore and Siddha tradition. Here is one of the stories according to Siddha tradition.

Siddhar Sri Kaga Busundar was the holy son of Saraswathi (or Sakalakala Valli, in Tamil). Goddess Saraswathi became a Guru (Master) to her holy son; she taught him everything about the creation of the world.

“One day the divine assembly gathered in Mount Kailash, the capital of the mystic world. (Kailash is a holy place in the Himalayan hills). All celestial devotees of Lord Siva and Goddess Parvathi asked their Lord about the secrets of the creation of the world. Lord Siva said, ‘I appoint Kaga Busundar as a Guru to this world; he is to teach the Secrets of Creation to all living beings and to all celestial administrators of the different worlds.’ Lord Siva asked his subordinates to follow the instruction of their Master or ‘Guru’, Kaga Busundar, who was the divine Master from that day on.”

All divine Siddhars and Maharishi’s sought to clarify their doubts by praying to Kaga Busundar. From that day on Kaga Busundar guides the world wisely with dharma. He revealed sacred arts and yogic techniques. Kaga Busundar is the Guru of sage Vasishta Maharishi; Vasishta Maharishi is the guru of the avatar Rama.

Kaga Busundar is a being of “Chiranjeevi” (eternal life); away from the eyes of the world, he is living, blessing and guiding the world.

In his classical works, Kaga Busundar Perunool Kaviyam 1 000, he mentions how during ‘Pralaya’ (dissolution of the world) he survived in the form of a Crow and was witness to the creation of the world again. Seeing this, the Trimurti’s (Holy Trinity) enquired, appreciating his deathlessness. He imparted his wisdom of “Immortality” to them, gracing them thus.

We can feel the presence of Kaga Busundar Maharishi in the temple of Uttarha Kosa Mangai, a village nearly 1 20 kilometres west of Madurai. The Uttarha Kosa Mangai kovil consists of three temples: 1) the main sanctum; 2) Adi-Chidambaram, a small temple containing a statue of Lord Natarajar made of emerald, and 3) a small shrine of Lord Ganesha. Behind the statue of Lord Ganesha is the sanctum of the Sahasra lingam. Built around the tree is a raised platform, containing the very holy ancient ‘paduka’ (wooden sandals) of Vyasa Maharishi. This tree, an elandai tree (with small orange-coloured fruits, the size of small Amla), is said to be 3000 years old.

Beneath the elandai tree is the statue of Lord Ganesha. It is believed that this is the very place where Lord Ganesha appeared to Vyasa and wrote the great Hindu Epic Mahabharatha, as Vyasa expounded to him. It is also said

that Lord Ganesha broke one of his tusks to write with. There is also a holy tank in front of this small shrine.

It has been said that Lord Natarajar shared divine secrets to the people at a holy temple in Chidambaram. Here, at Uttarha Kosa Mangai, another name for Adi-Chidambaram, divine secrets were revealed only to Goddess Uma. No one is allowed to remain in the temple premises at night due to security concerns for the emerald Lord Natarajar.

Only once a year, on the full moon of Arudra nakshatra, (mid December to mid January) does the emerald clad Lord Natarajar gives darshan. The rest of the year the temple is locked, and the statue hidden covered with sandal wood paste (chandan). On the auspicious day of Arudhra, the holy sandalwood paste is washed away and offered to devotees as prasad. This mixture of water and holy sandalwood paste that covers the emerald Lord Natarajar for a year is said to have great medicinal and divine properties.

According to the Siddha tradition, Kaga Busundar Maharishi is believed to be ever living in the form of a crow (kagam in Tamil). There is a valuable work in Tamil written by him, called 'Kaga Busundar peru nool kaviam-1000'. This work consists of ancient Yogic secrets and Kayakalpa practices of Inner Alchemy.

Another one work of his is 'Kaga Busundar Pancha patchi sastra'. This work tells about occult astrology. (Pancha means five and patchi means bird.)

He has also written other works like 'Busundar Upanishad' and 'Busundar kural.'

In any Vedic spiritual practices while finishing a holy session, it is common to chant 'AUM SHANTHI, SHANTHI, SHANTHI'. Likewise, Siddha Kaga Busundar has revealed an important and excellent mantra to human beings for obtaining the blessings of existence. "NAR BAVI" - (Let good be manifested).



*“Blow the flute in song,
Blow the flute in song - O shepherd,
For in the music of Silence
Is Truly Freedom”!*

Poems of Idalkattu Siddha, Chapter Milking of cow, Verse 98



Idaikattu Siddhar was born in a village called Idaikattu. It is 24 kilometres from Madurai. His samadhi is in Thiruvannamalai.

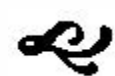
Here is an incident that took place.

“He was a herdsman, caring for cows. One time he pre-cognised a famine to strike throughout the world. Taking all his cows with him, he went up a nearby hill. There, he called all the deity-ruler of each of the nine planets and offered them a feast. After eating the delicious food, all the planetary deities fell asleep. The deities lay down in a particular order to sleep. While they slept, Idaikattu Siddhar changed their positions! He changed their positions from a famine-causing order into a fertile order. When they awoke, they realized what the wise herdsman had done. So in the village where Idaikattu Siddhar lived, famine did not come!”

The inner meaning to this story says: *Wherever one is, if he lives according to dharma, then the dharma of the universe can never fail; no disorder or disharmony will come. The real meaning of dharma is: living in harmony with nature.*

Since Idaikattu Siddhar changed the dharma (or nature) of time, here in Tamil Nadu he is worshipped by the followers of Siddha system at times when planetary relations can cause difficulties or bad effects on one’s life.

Idaikattu Siddhar Padalgal (songs) can be found in Gnana Kovai, a collection of Siddha songs edited by Aru Ramanathan.



*"I speak all the secrets untold,
They won't tell, even if you give a million Gold,
But, my work reveals all,
That's why all Siddhas hide it from the world."*

Konganavar Kalpam - 100



Siddha Konganavar undertook severe tapas at a very young age after which he attained many Yogic Siddhis (powers).

"Once, as he was walking near a forest, droppings from a crane flying overhead landed upon his head. Konganavar looked up at the crane and using his third eye instantly burned it to ashes. He then continued walking."

In those days, whenever hermits came begging for food the householders would always like to offer food. Passing through another village Siddha Konganavar stood outside the gates of one house, extended his cupped hands and called out: 'A Siddhar has come! Offer some food!'

There was no response. Still waiting for the food he stood outside the gate of the house and once again called out, 'I have come'.

Still no one emerged from the house carrying food. Instead he heard, 'Wait!' So he was kept waiting.

At the time, the woman of the family was occupied serving food to her husband. She simply called out, 'Wait' and didn't leave and come until she had finished fulfilling her dharma.

At last, she emerged from the house. Siddha Konganavar didn't realise why she had taken so long and was already terribly angry. Once again, he used his yogic powers in his anger. But to his surprise, it didn't affect the woman at all.

She laughed and said: 'Do you think I am a crane?'

'How did she know?' he wondered. 'How is it that my Siddhi powers had no effect?' 'How is this all possible?'

Siddha Konganavar's ego was shattered by this simple instance. In that moment itself, he dropped all his cravings for Siddhis and Yogic powers.

The woman spoke, "When one follows one's own inherent dharma, nothing can harm or affect them. That is the real path to wisdom."

After that, Konganavar Siddha attained Gnana, self-realization, and went on to expound all the teachings of the Siddha system with great lucidity. Siddha Konganavar's samadhi is at Tirupathi, in Andhra Pradesh.

Some of His works are:

Konganavar Vatha kandam has 3 parts

Mudal kandam, Irandam kandam – The first and second volumes are about preparing medicines, and the medicinal nature of herbs and metals.

Kadai kandam (third) – Clearly explains the Siddha's Vaasi Yoga, internal alchemical processes and the Sri Chakra Pooja and Sakthi worship. Many Siddhars appreciate and refer to the treatise of Siddha Konganavar and recommend it to seekers.



“There once lived a sage in the depths of a forest, performing penance in quiet solitude. Whenever he felt hunger he collected some dry leaves fallen from trees, and consumed them and continue with his penance. He thus lived his hermit life peacefully.

The king came to hear of the sage’s presence in a forest of his kingdom. Wishing to verify the genuinity and true potential of the sage, the King made an announcement to his entire Kingdom, calling forth anyone who could prove the true state of the sage. Not many were keen to engage in this kind of an endeavour. All but one kept their silence. A daasi from a village came forward and agreed for this work. The king accepted.

The daasi began living close to the hut of this hermit. One day when the hermit was immersed in penance, she crept into his hut and mixed some crushed Papad (Thin Roasted bread preparation) into the collected dry leaves. She continued this for some time. Her plan was to gradually stimulate his taste buds for delicious foods.

After a short period, she noticed a change in the Sage. Gathering some courage, she initiated some contact and began helping him in simple household chores. In this manner, the daasi gained familiarity between the sage and herself.

In due course, this familiarity grew into intimacy and culminated into a strong bond. Soon she gave birth to a child.

At this time, the daasi went to the King and declared she was ready to prove what the King had asked. Together, they secretly conceived a plan. They decided to invite many people to the King’s court where she would perform a dance.

According to the secret plan, the King announced a day and people were invited.

On this day, the daasi deliberately left home without feeding her infant child. She went to the Kings court and amidst the large crowd of people began the performance of her dance.

Meantime, at home, the infant awoke crying with hunger.

During the dance, the daasi suddenly noticed the sage standing in one corner holding the little infant in his arms. Without interrupting her performance, she first glanced at the Sage and then meaningfully at the King, indicating the sage had come.

Then suddenly amidst her graceful dance movements the daasi intentionally kicked off one of her anklets, sending it sweeping across the floor to land where the sage stood. She danced towards the Sage in graceful whirling movements and lifted her bare ankle out to him. The sage bent forward, lifted up the anklet and clasped it back on her raised leg. Uproar broke out amongst the visiting guests.

The courts filled with laughter and mockery at the usual action of Sage, condemning him to have been entranced by the daasi and losing his Sage hood.

But the sage remained indifferent to the retorts and reactions of the people. Calm and unshaken he began singing...

*“Let anger be dropped, victoriously,
Let release the contemplating mind - until depletion,
If it were true, I sleep day and night in Grace,
May even stone split, transforming as infinite space.”*

Just as he finished all the sculptured stones in the Kings court burst and shattered leaving the people in shock. The people now came forward in salutation to the Sage, unquestioning his divinity.”

This is none other than Siddha Kaduveli.

This instance clearly shows one cannot judge or recognise a Siddha from his mere appearance or lifestyle as his existence prevails beyond all conditions.

His works are:

Kaduveli Siddhar Padalgal

Kaduveli Siddhar Gnanavindham



AGAPAI

There is not a lot of information available about Agapai Siddhar. He lived the simple life of a weaver. Agapai felt a naturally growing dispassion towards the transitory nature of the world and a calling towards the path of Truth. Whenever he observed the strong attachments and the heavy conditioning of the people around him, out of his compassion he would share some insights and attempt to highlight the transitory nature of the world and help them see Truth. But their lack of understanding only made them tease and laugh at him instead. Ultimately, he withdrew from society and took to wandering.

“One day while Agapai was walking near a forest appeared before him a Jothi Vriksha (tree of Light) with a huge opening in the trunk. He felt a tremendous peace engulfing him and was pulled into the opening where he sat in meditation. Years passed. One day, the great Vyasa Maha Rishi appeared before this opening and blessed him for his penance, granting him the realisation of Truth and for him to be a great Gnani. The Maha Rishi also bestowed him the blessings for sharing Truth with the people through his powerful divine verses.”

From that moment, he became Siddha Agapai whose graceful and powerful songs even now are transformational. Hitting one's very core, they bring one to experience the true essence of the Siddha path.

*“The place where I remained Summa - Agapai
Burnt me, as I told;
What a miracle, I do not know - Agapai,
Then I couldn't find myself there!”*

Agapai Siddhar Padalgal, Verse 45

*“To whom does Saivam belong - Agapai?
To those who have known their own Self,
That place where Saivam is seen - Agapai,
That is the feet of the Sat Guru.”*

Agapai Siddhar Padalgal, Verse 55

Some of His works are:

Agapai Siddhar Padal-90

Agapai Puma Gnanam-15





*“There are rivers, groves, beautiful streets,
Encircling Temples, the sacred ash,
rags to wear and loincloth;
O heart! That roars flustered, visiting daily,
each house,
Begging alms; Eating sleeping and remaining
poised in ‘Summa’, Is, indeed ‘Sugam.’”*

Pattinathar Podu Padalgal, Verse 16

(‘Summa’ means ‘just being’ and ‘Sugam’ means ‘Bliss’)

“Named as Swedaraniyam at birth, this child was born into a rich family of Vaisa caste (Merchant caste). Right from his young days, Swedaraniyam was made to engage in the family business of exporting and shipping pearls to nearby countries. At the proper age, he was married to a woman named Sivakalai. Even after many years of marriage, they hadn’t conceived a child. Swedaraniyam was a pious individual so he, along with his wife set off on a pilgrimage.

One day, while travelling they noticed a Brahmin couple standing under a tree holding a newborn child in their arms. Seeing Swedaraniyam, they approached him with the humble request of accepting this child as their own. The Brahmin couple explained they were suffering dire conditions and didn’t have enough even to feed their own stomachs. Hearing this Swedaraniyam recollected a dream he had just two nights ago. In his dream, he had seen the exact same Brahmin couple coming to him and giving him a child.

Recognising this dream as the grace of Lord Shiva, he and his wife, graciously accepted the Brahmin child. They named him Marudha Vanan. Days happily passed and Swedaraniyam’s child grew up. Both parents noticed how their child was completely uninterested in school matters and activities, displaying a steady dispassion towards worldly interests.

On reaching adult age, Marudha Vanan’s father forcibly sent him on a ship to other countries to trade their pearls for other gems stones. Months went by. Swedaraniyam and his wife eagerly awaited the return of their only son anxiously wondering how he would have fared in his first business trip.

The ship returned. Marudha Vanan’s assistants returned to the house with several big bags. Swedaraniyam eagerly opened one of the bags and found it filled with cakes of cow dung.

There was no limit to Swedaraniyam's anger. Angrily he picked up a few cakes of cow dung and flung it across the floor. Out spilt many, many precious and valuable gemstones. Swedaraniyam was stunned. His heart was filled with regret at the surge of anger he had felt towards his son just moments before. Just then, he heard his son's calm voice asking him why he had reacted so angrily. His son's voice continued to speak. Swedaraniyam heard him say that he had brought him one more valuable item.

Marudha Vanan handed over a small box to his father. Swedaraniyam refused it saying he was already so overwhelmed by all the gems and jewels his son had brought back and didn't need anything more. But his son coaxed him to accept the small box, explaining it was more precious than everything in the bags.

When Swedaraniyam opened the box, he found a needle without an eye for the thread and a single palm script leaf. He lifted the palm script leaf. It said, 'Not even a needle without the eye will follow on your last day.' Reading this hit Swedaraniyam hard and he felt everything around him spinning. In that very instant he recognised his attachment to worldly things and the futility of it stared him in the face.

When he looked around his son had already gone. He searched everywhere, but in vain. He started calling out for his son. Hearing his cries, his wife and old mother came rushing and enquired what had happened.

Without further delay, Swedaraniyam changed into a simple loincloth and set off to a secluded spot in the same town. He lived in this spot and begged for his food. Along with other houses, he would even go and beg alms from his own home.

Swedaraniyam's sister and her husband also lived in the same town. She felt ashamed of her brother and the strange turn of events in his life. Her husband began to eye Swedaraniyam's plentiful property. One day Swedaraniyam was walking through the street where his sister lived. Seizing the opportunity, Swedaraniyam's sister called out to him and offered him a sweet doughnut-like cake. The wicked couple had poisoned the cake!

Swedaraniyam held the sweet cake in his hand and uttered to his sister, 'Ones karma itself will burn oneself, and this holed doughnut will burn the house.' At the end of these words, Swedaraniyam threw the cake on the roof of the house. The roof instantly caught fire and the house began to burn. Seeing this shocking occurrence, his sister and her husband instantly realised their grave mistake and fell at Swedaraniyam's feet begging forgiveness."

Swedaraniyam became a wanderer and was called Pattinathar by the people. One day while wandering, he travelled to the north of India for the darshan

of Goddess Ujjaini. At the time, the King of Ujjain was BhadraHari who in later years became a disciple of Pattinathar and by the grace of his Guru attained Truth realisation.

Many songs composed by Siddha Pattinathar lament for grace to reveal the transitory nature of the world. One day while walking by the seashore, Pattinathar saw some young fisherman lads playing and hiding themselves inside a cane basket. He went up to them and asked if he could play too. The boys agreed. So, Pattinathar took the cane basket and told the boys he would hide and they should come back a little later to look for him. The boys agreed. When the boys returned and upturned the cane basket, to their immense surprise they saw a Siva Lingam in the place where Pattinathar had sat. The name of this spot is Tiruvotriyur, a seashore in Chennai. Many flock to this Samadhi Shrine for the blessings of Siddha Pattinathar.

*“What though They do, What though They undergo,
The Liberated are ever poised in Silence.
With easy still, she sports a gait, flowing hands twain,
Yet, the housemaid has an eye on the water pot,
She carries over her head.”*

Pattinathar Podu Padalgal, Verse 18

*“Without wrath, desire, deed, remembrance,
Or forgetfulness, freed from intellect,
When shall I, all alone, remain poised,
In the blissful slumber of mystical drowse,
O Father, O lord of Kailash!” (? After kailash)*

Kailaya Darshan Padal, Siddha Pattinathar

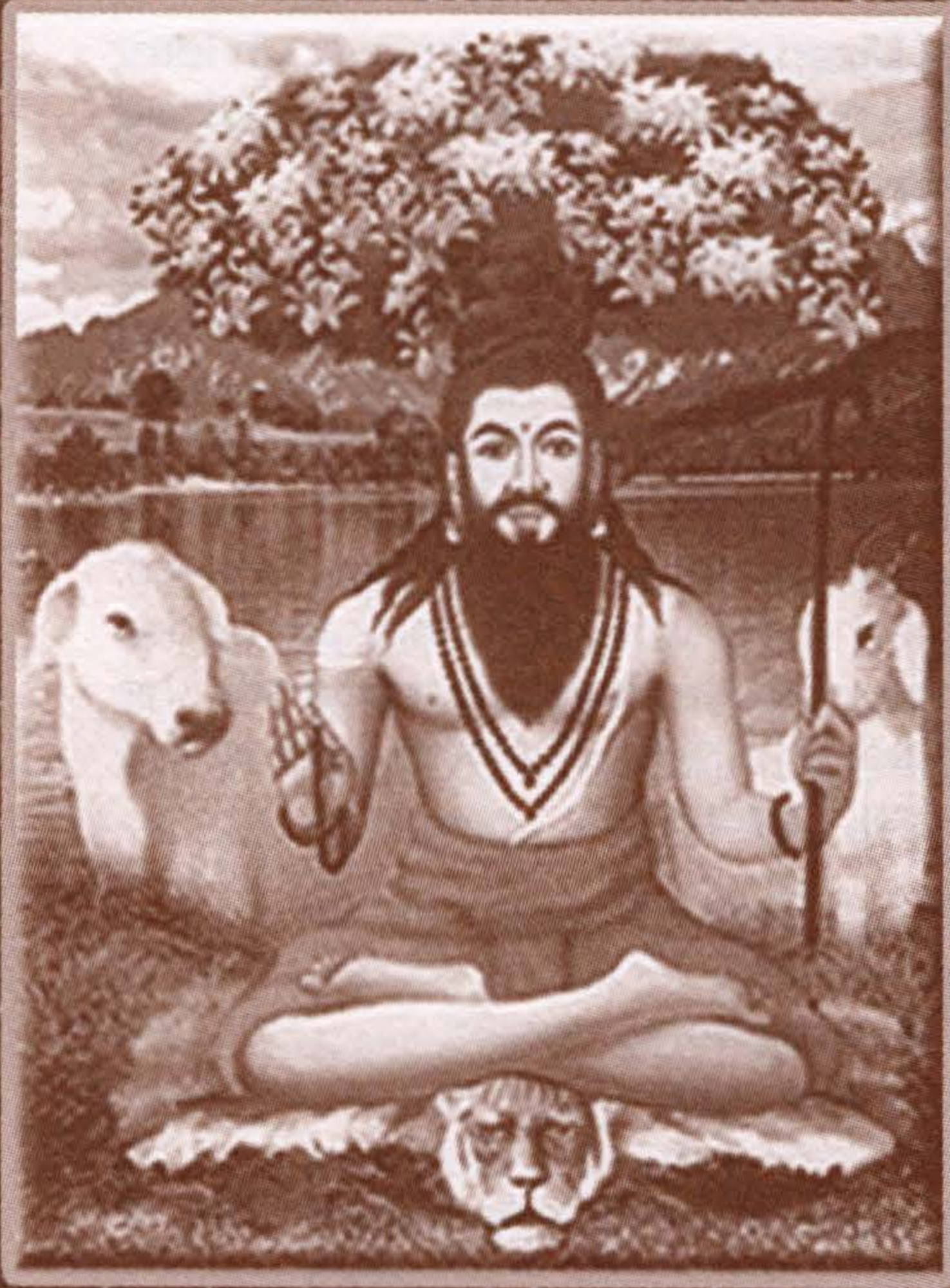
*“There is enough clothing when the chill wind blows;
There is something to cover when the sun’s heat grows;
There are shaded porches all over the world, for us to stretch;
When hungry, there is Siva, the Giver,
O heart! Nothing do we, lack”*

Pattinathar Podu Padalgal, Verse 17

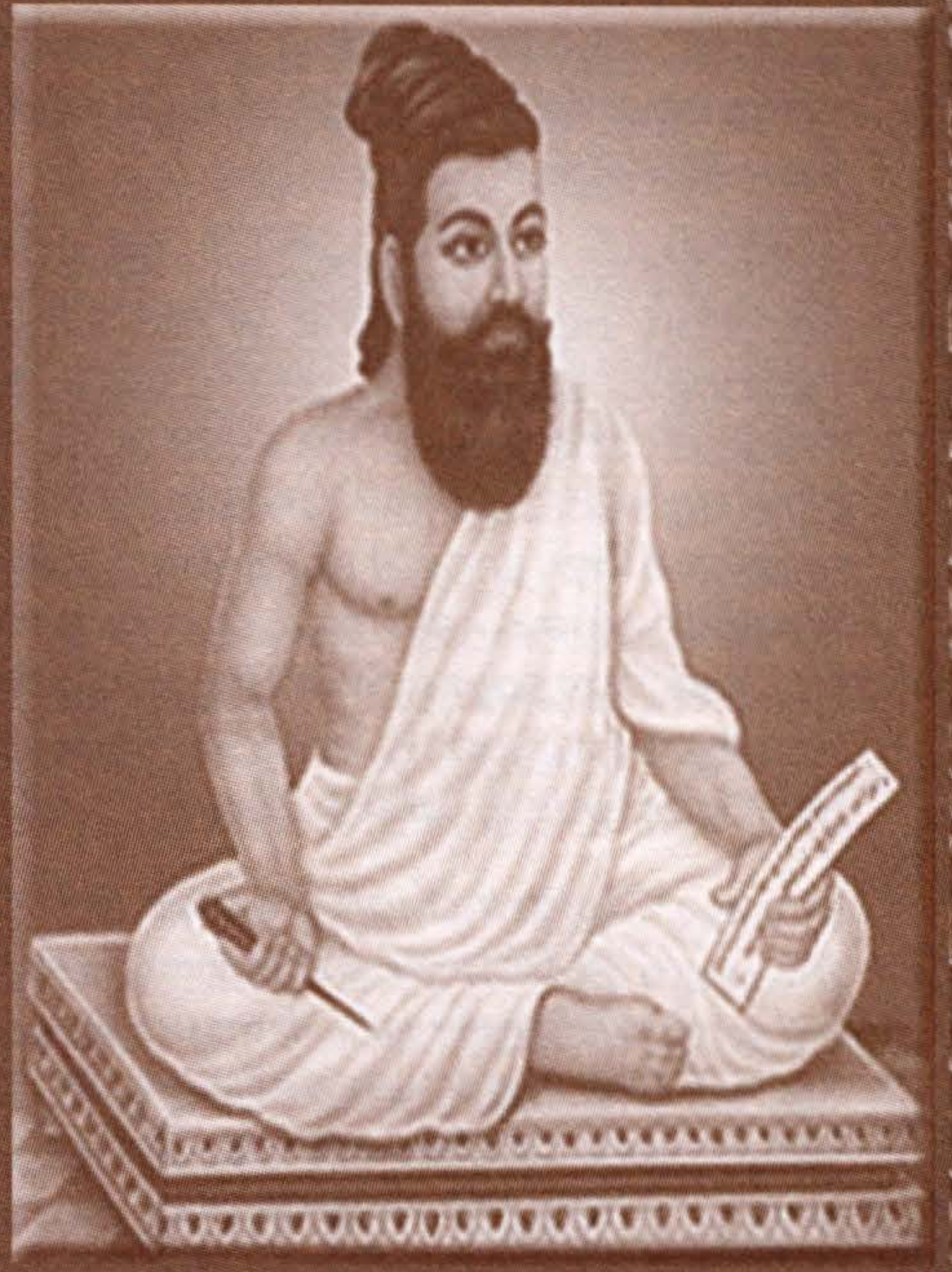
Some of his works are:

Arut pulambal-116
Koyir Tiru Agaval-4 sections
Nenjodu Pulambal-37
Purna malai-102
Gnanam-100
Tiru Ekamba Malai
Podu Padalgal

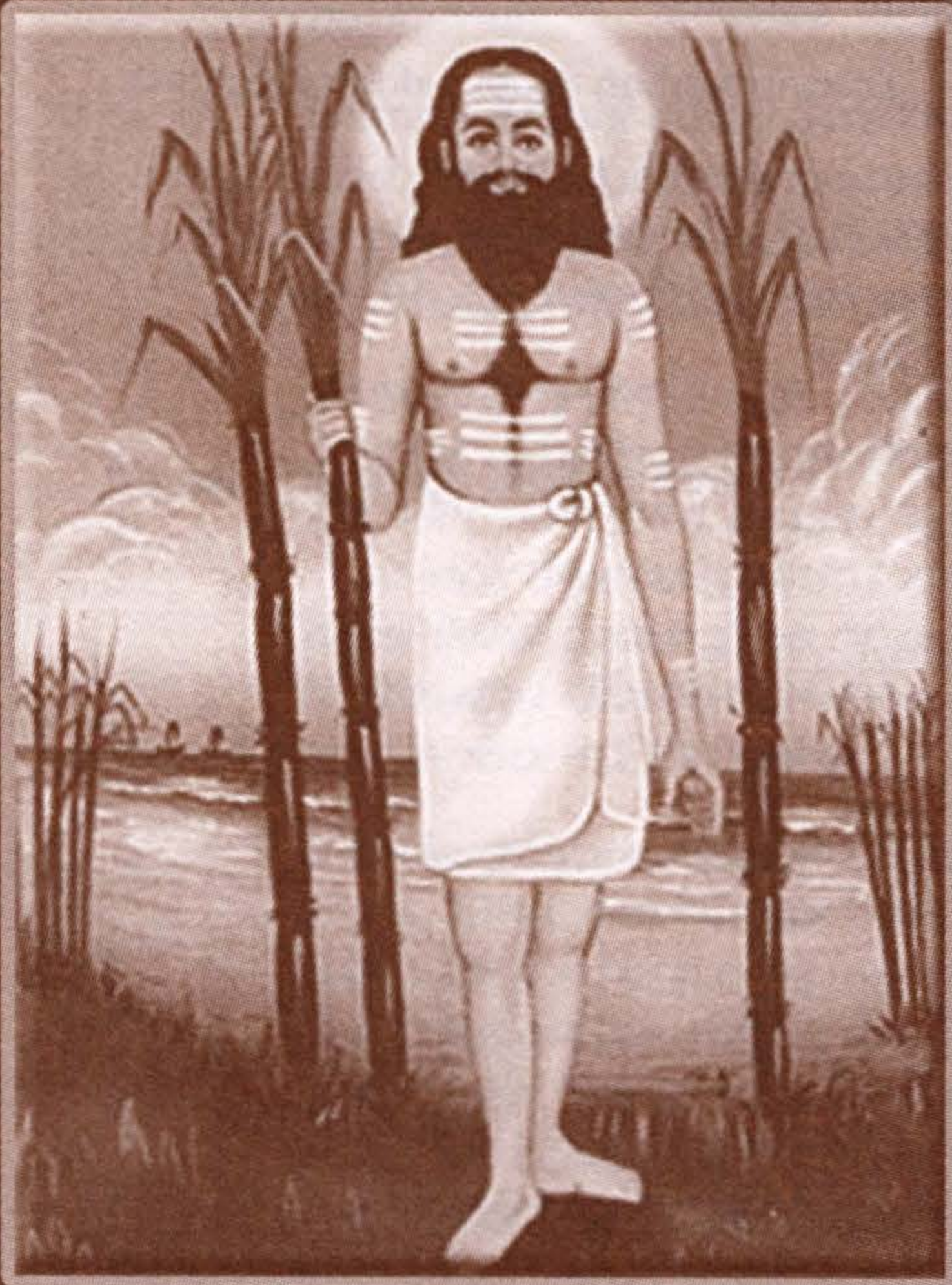




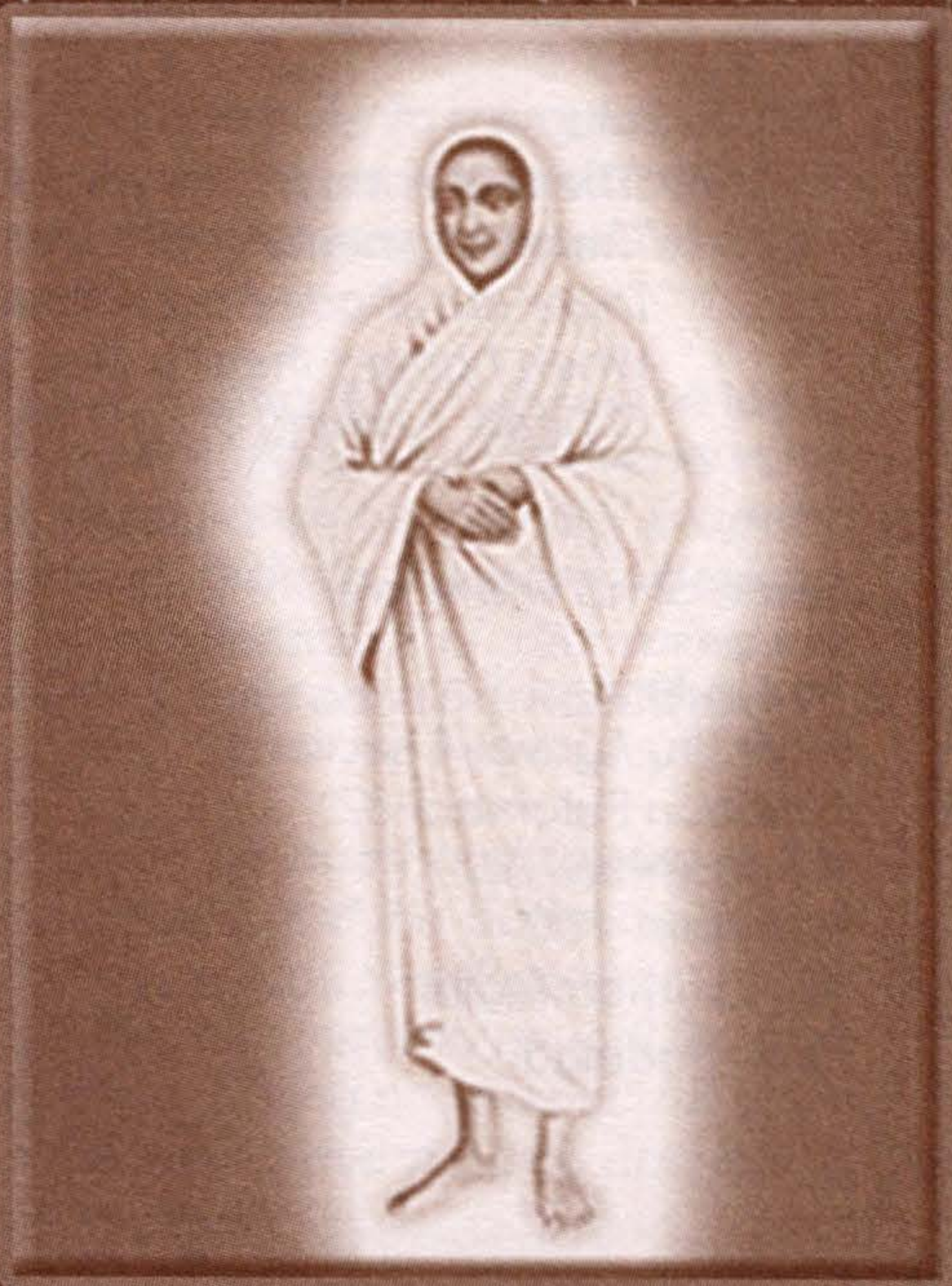
Idaikattu Siddha



Siddha Thiruvalluvar



Siddha Pattinathar



Siddha Ramalingam

"It was a priest who first recognised him..."

A man with his five-month old child came for the darshan of Lord Natarajar in the Chidambaram Temple. He stood there as the curtain before Lord Natarajar's sanctum was pulled aside. The priest began performing Aarti to the Lord. In the same instant, the five-month old child burst into loud laughter.



The surprised priest emerged from the sanctum and went towards the child and seeing his face instantly recognised him. He said to the father that whom he knew as his own child, was in Truth none other than the Lord's child. This incident took place in the year 1824.



At the age of eight, this child was once seated before a mirror in a dark room with only a lamp burning beside him. While looking in the mirror, the reflection of his own face suddenly disappeared and instead Lord Murugan appeared in the form of a beam of a Light, who entered into the eight year old by merging into his forehead.



For a few years of his adult life, he lived in a small house in a village called Karunguli. An old woman would come and help around in the daily housework and look after him. With the light of a small lamp, he spent his nights writing devotional poems and songs.

In those days, oil lamps were lit in small mud or clay pots. But, to prevent it from drinking too much oil, it was customary to keep it filled with water overnight before its first use. This would saturate the pores in the mud and prevent it from soaking in too much oil.

Once, it so happened that the clay pot cracked and the old woman bought a new one. She filled it with water and left it to soak overnight. She left for her home without mentioning anything about the new clay pot. Completely engrossed in writing poetry the evening came to pass and darkness began to fall. He lit the lamp and continued his divine writings..."

This incident brought to light to his true nature to the villagers who were earlier completely unaware of his divinity.

No one really knew what his practices were. They would often find him in strange paradoxical instances. At times, they found him seated amidst a burning charcoal fire in the hot noon sun. And when some people had entered his

room suddenly without calling, they have found his body separated into nine parts. This is called 'Navakanda Yoga', in the Siddha cult.

While giving discourses, the people sitting in the last row and the people sitting in the first row would hear him the same. And many a times he has resurrected the dead merely by his compassionate glance.

Finally, he sang in His songs

*"Oh, divine Light,
You made me a great Siddha
Amongst the other Siddhas,
And all Siddhas speak in surprise of me."*

He transformed His physical body into Suddha Deha (pure immaculate body), his subtle body into 'Pranava Deha (Omkar, or primal sound body) and his causal body into Gnana Deha (Body of wisdom) and attained a Light body, known as "Oli Udambu".

This is the great revered Siddha Saint Ramalingam, also known as 'Vallalaar', by the people; the magnanimous, generous and compassionate one. He lived in society from 1823 to 1874.

In the year 1874, Siddha Saint Ramalingam entered into a room and transformed into Light, disappearing for the ordinary eyes. This room is found in a town called Vaddallur and many of his devotees frequent this town for his blessings.

Siddha Ramalingam's life was filled with heart rendering devotion and immense compassion towards the suffering of all living beings, which is what, caused the divine phenomena of melting, the habituated grossness, the inertia and the tamasic nature caught in his body right down to the root cellular level and then alchemically transformed Him into a gracious eternal divine Light.

This great Siddha Saint sang of death as an ignorant habit and a careless mistake...

*"O people of the world,
Come! Come you can live the life
Of deathlessness,
Speaking the truth,
Nor exaggerate nor lie!
But speaking the solemn truth
Come, follow me,
To enter the hall of Gold
The hall of Gnosis"*

Verse 5876 of Thirunarutpa

This was a turning point for many Siddha followers as it brought reality and Truth to the ancient 'belief and mythical possibility' of Immortality, sung in the Siddha verses. Not so long ago did this great Siddha Saint, in his physical form live amongst the people showering his compassion and grace to one and all. And when this compassionate one did leave his physical body, he did so merging himself within all living beings only to re-emerge as the seed, flowering into spiritual transformation. On his final farewell discourse, a few moments prior to his disappearance into Light, he proclaimed to his loved devotees ...

"I am in this body, Henceforth, I would enter all physical bodies..."

Peru Upadesha Jan 1874

Some of His works are:

Thiruarutpa (6000 songs)

Manu Murai Kanda Vasagam - ethical prose work

Upadesha (his sacred teachings)

Classification of Herbs

Collection of letters to his devotees

*"He reigned supreme from my mid-point eye brow;
In His luminosity like that of the camphor flame,
I see no smoke, no flickering, but steady vision;
He unleashed the closed gateway of my mid-eye,
And liberated me from darkness to light everlasting;
It was all His sport, glorified in the sacred lore!*

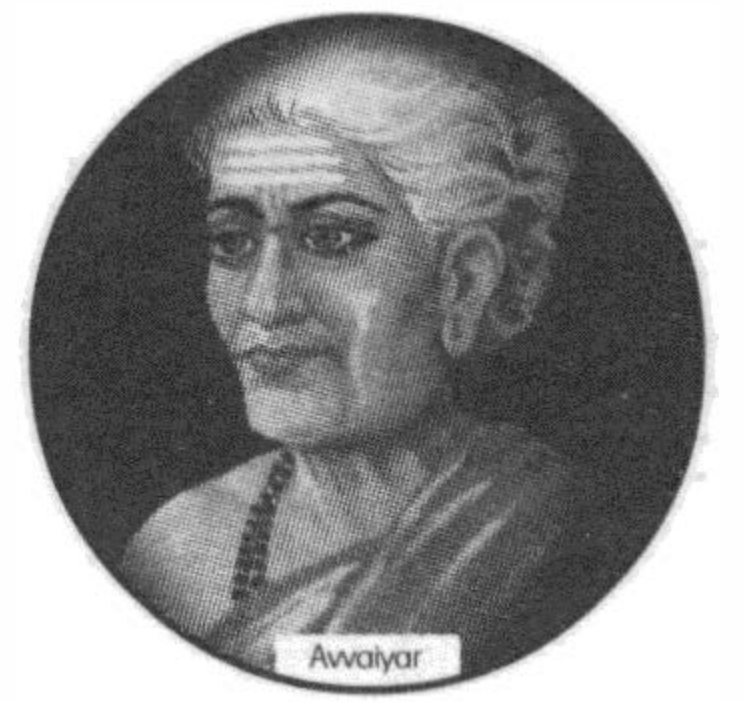
*In the pinnacle of Light Mountain, I saw Thee,
My eyes rejoiced in awareness serene; my eyes
See naught but Thy light of consciousness;
It is the light of Truth, the Light of justice,
The light of purity, the Light of righteousness;
Such is Thy Luminosity Supreme That immersed me in bliss"*

Verses from Mahadeva Malai By Siddha Saint Ramalingam



AWAIYAR

The very occasion of Avvaiyar's birth was significant. By pre-ordained karma, her parents had agreed to abandon the baby at the very moment of birth, but the mother could not wrench herself away. At that time, baby Avvai comforted her by words, saying,



"Lord Siva who has intentionally brought me forth into this world and has imprinted my destiny on my forehead has not died, so, O mother even though dire famine stalks the land, the burden of succouring me is His. Don't be afraid to leave me alone."

So, a wandering minstrel one of the lowest classes in society brought up Avvai. She remained a divine spinster all her life. In all the numerous legends and tales spoken of her life, she is always referred to as Grandma Avvai.

Her upbringing by a wandering minstrel seemed to have given her the wanderlust and groomed her into a divine singer and natural poet. The moment she sang of anyone, an abundance of worldly possessions would be showered on that person.

Three incidents not only reveal the magnanimity of her life but also her deep trait of Godliness, devotion and profound wisdom.

"Once while participating in a social event held in the precincts of a Temple, she squatted on the floor with legs outstretched towards the sanctum. Seeing this, the priest got highly annoyed and scolded her, 'How dare you do this. Old age doesn't entitle you to take such liberties in the presence of God. You shall not point your legs in the direction of God'.

Avvai quietly listened and then said, 'O, my friend, please excuse this old woman. Show me a direction where the Lord is not; I shall stretch my tired legs that way, with no disrespect to GOD.'"

There was no equal to Avvai and her ready wit for satire and quick repartition. Her brilliance, genius and quick witticism of lucid sense, was something everyone had to bow before.

Once, it so happened, God himself wished to verify Avvai's humility...

"Avvai was winding her way along a lonely path, when she saw a beautiful Jambu Tree. She glanced up to check whether the tree bore any fruits. Instead, she saw perched on some branches was a shepherd boy coolly eating the fruits. In her usual audacious manner, she called out, 'my little fellow, will you give me some fruit?'

The boy replied, 'Yes, grandma, but do you want hot fruits or cold ones?'

This was totally unknown to Awai. Piqued, she felt it below dignity to ask what exactly he meant by hot fruits and cold ones. She replied, 'Give me a hot fruit'.

The boy plucked out some large and ripe fruits and threw them down. They landed on the sandy earth. Awai started picking them up, blowing on each to clear the sand.

Seeing this, the boy instantly taunted, 'Grandma, blow well, it's a hot fruit and will cool only on blowing.' Startled by the retort, Awai felt humbled. Her countenance fell.

'O, Lord, am I thus to be humbled by a poor shepherd boy?', she cried.

The boy jumped down from his perching place. Smiling before her was none other than Lord Murugan, with his peacock. He consoled her, 'Grandma, do not fret. We desired to hear something from you and so performed this sport. Will you answer a few questions?'

Awai was greatly relived to see Lord Murugan. He posed four questions to her.

'What is sweet?'

Awai said, 'being in solitude is sweet; worshipping the Primal Lord, is sweeter. More than this is hearing divine words in the holy vicinity of the truly, Divine. And the most sweet, is seeing the Guru always, both in waking and dreaming...'

Next the Lord asked, 'What is hard?'

Awai replied, 'poverty is hard; poverty in a young age is even harder. Harder still is an incurable disease. Exceedingly hard is a faithless woman and the hardest is to take food from her...'

The third question He asked was, 'What is great?'

Awai replied, 'the world is big and Brahma, its creator, is even bigger. He was born out of the naval of Vishnu. Vishnu sleeps on the ocean of Milk. The oceans were all just one sip for the GuruMuni Agasthiyar. He in turn was born out of a Kumbha, an earthen pot; the pot is a piece of clay from the earth, which hangs under the hood of the serpent Adishesha. The serpent is a ring on the little finger of Goddess Parvathi, who is merged with Lord Siva. Siva is contained in the hearts of His devotees. The greatness of these devotees is indeed indescribable.'

Pleased, he asked her the last question, 'what is rare?'

Awai spoke: 'rare is human birth and even rarer is birth without any deformity. Even after such a birth, it is rare for one to be interested in learning and wisdom. Even if one has such an interest, it is rare to find one performing penance and giving charity. Even though one does penance and charity, the way to liberation should unfold; that is truly most rare.'"

Delighted, Lord Murugan showered His blessings on Awaiyar.



Awaiyar was once asked to define the four Purusharthas (the 4 stages to be accomplished in a human life.)

She replied,

*"Giving is Aram (Dharma),
Earning in the righteous way is Porul (Artha).
Two lovers entwined in one-heartedness and an offered mutual support up to thought level, is Enbam (Kama).
Relinquishing, all these with your heart set on God, is Veedu (Moksha)."*

On another occasion, when Awai was asked about the art of living, she replied,

*"That is true religion, which perceived unity in all things;
That is true valour, which has conquered the senses;
That is true learning which enables one to be kept alive forever and,
That indeed is true sustenance which does not make a slavery of another."*

Awaiyar's life on earth came to end by amazing divine grace.

'During her last days, Awaiyar was immersed in the worship of Lord Ganesha. One day while performing her daily Pooja, through her inner vision she saw her friend, the great Saint Sundarar having completed his mission on earth and being taken to Kailash, the abode of Lord Siva, at HIS command. Seeing this, Awai turned anxious to leave her mortal coil and depart to Kailash along with Sundarar. So, in her anxiety started hurrying the Pooja. However, Lord Ganesha himself said to her, 'Grandma, do your Pooja as usual, without haste. We shall drop you to Kailash even before your friend arrives there.'

So, Awai performed her Pooja as usual and sang a song for Lord Ganesha. She sang beautiful praises of his infinite grace helping all

mortals. After the pooja, Lord Ganesha lifted her with his trunk and placed her in Kailash! Awai's joy knew no bounds.'

The song she sang on this occasion is still sung throughout the land of Tamil Nadu, during the festival of Ganesha Chaturthi. It carries a symbolical significance of a yogic experience and has been added in the Yogic Section later in the book.

*"Having known the One that knows him,
Then who else is there to know oneself?"*

Awai Kural, chapter 2, Cotton on fire, Verse 5

*"Having known Ajapa and gazing the awakening flame within,
No birth on earth for him."*

Awai Kural, chapter 2, Cotton on fire, Verse 6

*"Siva will not inhere in oneself,
Whose mind not be steady on any one thing."*

Awai Kural, Gnana Veli, Verse 8

*"Within the heart of the devotee who knows the self within,
Hara (Siva) resides as Love"*

*"At the moment of perceiving the wealth that is beyond all limits,
Illumination exists as silence there!"*

*"Whatever you learn and what you hear, understand
The wisdom thereof abiding in it,
Then it transforms as liberation!"*

*"To whom the new moon becomes the full moon,
Then life and form will be synchronised to Him!"*

Awai Kural, chapter 10, Verse 7

Some of Her other works are:

Vinayakar Agaval

Awai Kural (describes in depth all dimensions of Yogic experience, by way of short couplets, in a Sutra form.)

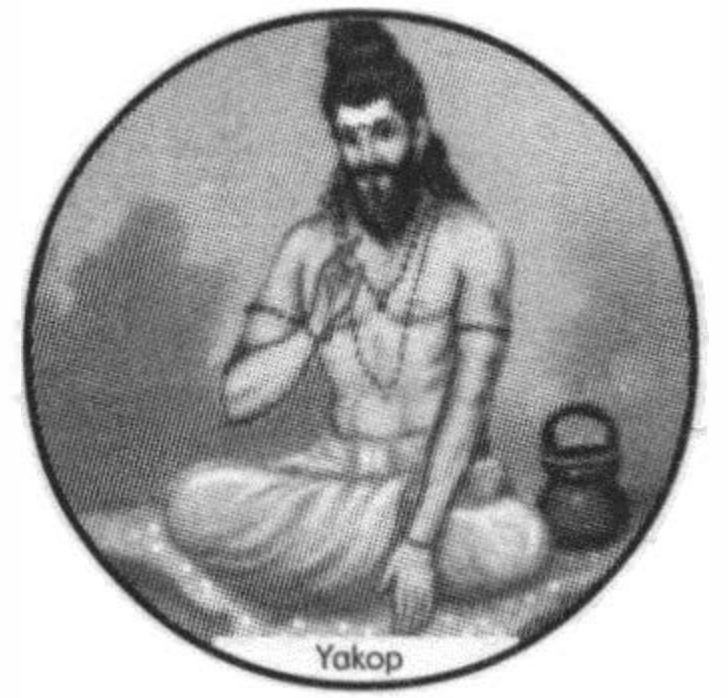
Ethical works: Athi Chudi, Kondrai venthan, Moothurai...



YAKOP

His original name was Ramadevar Siddha.

Encountering the miseries of the world and finding shallowness in ritual practices, he dropped both and began wandering aimlessly. People started calling him crazy. Even he began calling himself mad. He wandered through many different places, even amongst crowds in this mad state for six whole years.



One day he saw a man walking in the street who looked completely crazy, appearing unconventional in all aspects of his behaviour. Yakop realised his madness stood shattered before the massive intoxication of divine madness that radiated from this completely mad Sage, Bhuthananda. Yes, this was Yakop's first Guru who initiated him into the path of the Siddhas. After receiving a genuine initiation from Siddha Bhuthananda, Yakop settled in a mountain cave as per his Guru's instructions. He remained in his seated posture and state for twelve long years. The way of the mystics flourished finally! After those twelve long years, first Lord Subramaniam, Guru of Sage Agasthiyar appeared before Yakop. And after this, Siddha Agasthiyar appeared. Yakop received teachings from them through mystical experiences of the Siddha path.

In this manner, Yakop had the Darshan and a meeting with all the ancient Siddhas earlier to his period. This entire information has been narrated by Yakop, himself in his divine work Yakop Vakara Kandam.



Once, He made a mysterious aerial visit (kagana markkam in Tamil) to Mecca. During this visit, he stood victorious in a debate on the Sastras with some Islamic scholars. As recorded in the seventh poem of his work, *Yakop Vaidhiya Chintamani*, he describes how they lovingly embraced him after the debate and his victory.

Perhaps he converted to Islam influenced by his Islamic preceptor. It was his teacher who named him 'Yakopu,' the Tamilised form of Jacob. His leanings towards Islam are understood from the opening poem itself as he offers prayers to both, Nabimaar (another name for the prophet Mohammed) and to the messengers of Allah.

The following poems sing his worship to the Hindu Pantheon Gods revealing his attachment to his original faith too. After narrating his autobiographical account, Siddha Yakop (or Ramadevar Siddhar) proceeds directly to outline the contents of the whole text, dealing with a variety of medicines.

Vaidhiya Chintamani: is one of the best treatises on Siddha medicine.

Books of this type are the treasure houses of the native Siddha system of medicine, the secrets of which are known only to those belonging to the tradition of preceptor and pupil. Detailed instructions of the preparation of hundreds of medicines and drugs out of minerals, metal dusts, nuts, roots, barks, acids, spices, herbs and oils are elaborately presented. One medicine gets the name 'Chinese limestone' (Cheenakkara Chunnam) as recorded in poem 241 of this text. In this context, it is not out of place to note that Siddha Bogar, one of the great Siddhas, had visited China several times and had close contacts with people there, as mentioned in his medicinal treatise. In addition to that, as revealed by different sources, cultural contacts with these foreign people are further attested by recorded anecdotes in relation to the general Siddha Tradition and in particular of Siddha Yakop and Siddha Bogar.

At present, the biggest handicap felt is the unavailability of some of the valued ancient Tamil Siddhars' literatures. Due to repeated foreign invasions into India, most of the ancient palm-leaf manuscripts have been either destroyed or transported to other countries.



I have read an article written by C.S. Mohana Velu, which was included from a Hindu newspaper into Samagra Vikas, a Vivekananda Kendra Prakashan Trust Publication:

"The Germans, who came to Tamil Nadu in 1706, knew nothing about tropical herbs and diseases until they suffered from skin-rashes, boils and dysentery during their stay. Struck by nascent investigation, the Germans evinced a keen interest in the Siddha system. They collected hundreds of medicinal palm leaf manuscripts and sent them, along with notes of German translations, to Germany "in remarkable haste, by the next available ship". Not a single native medical observation seems to have escaped their watchful eyes, nearly 300 years ago.

A German diary dated February 20, 1726 said that Siddha doctors of that time (almost 300 years ago) knew and wrote about as many as 4,448 diseases and their corresponding herbal treatment.

Among the hundreds of medical manuscripts, which the Germans took away, information is available about only a few:

Vaguda Chuvadi deals with the origins and symptoms of diseases, their confirmation by pulse-study, and treatment methods of diseases.

Udal kooru thathuvam deals with the five elements, the five senses, and with diseases and related medicinal notes.

Siddha aruda nandi chindu deals exclusively with poisonous insects and herbal treatment.

Vaguda sasthiram (in 6 volumes and 120 chapters) deals with pathology, toxicology, surgery, as well as diseases of men, women and children, and the corresponding herbal treatment of these diseases, as well as methods of pulse study, etc.

Thus, the Siddha system turned into a source of fascination to the Germans, and it was through them that the other Western countries also came to know of this rich medicinal heritage born in India.

It is highly probable that as man started migrating to places, it is how the system was carried out and took on various different names in different places.

A treasury of Siddha sources of information, together with a record of observations by Germans, on the Tamil language, literature and culture, in diaries, travel accounts, station registers, personal letters, etc., numbering 200,000 manuscripts, is still there, in Franken's archives of the Martin Luther University, Germany."

Here in Tamil Nadu there are still many palm scripts in the possession of certain local persons. Many of these have not yet been put to practical use and are kept undisclosed. The palm scripts have not been allowed to move into the right hands. In the olden days palm scripts were passed from Master to disciple which is how the palm scripts flourished; by their use for practical work. It is unfortunate that the younger generations of today bear no understanding of the value of a palm script. The palm scripts are carelessly undermined or damaged and thrown away due to lack of care after the death of the elders who originally had kept the palm script so sacredly and safely.

These palm scripts are age-old natural treasures holding the keys for all civilisations and their difficulties, the hidden mysteries of life and beyond. The Government as well as people of the private sector could come forward to help in the preservation and maintenance of these valuable treasures of our country for the coming generations of the world.

The native healers, Vaidhiyas, of the Siddha system should be recognised for the in depth and valuable experience and for the wholistic knowledge they have attained. It is unwise and un-necessary to shun them based on their so-called lack of scientific explanations. Instead, we can offer our heartfelt salutation to them, as it is entirely through them that this valuable healing and medicinal system carries on and survives through all of these thousands of years.



SECTION TWO

TREE OF LIFE AND ITS BRANCHES



Creation

TATTWAS

*“Who can know the greatness of our Lord?
Who can know His length and breadth?
An infinite nameless flame is HE,
Whose unknowable roots, I venture to speak.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 95, Siddha Thirumoolar

Sivam or Brahmam is pure consciousness and can be defined as the boundless plenum into which the universe is born, grows and dies; and as the continuum of experience that pervades, sustains and vitalises all Existence!

How did the world come to be?

From the Source is derived an altered state, from which is derived another, and yet another and again and so on...until the process of evolution comes to rest at the point where no more creation or evolution is needed - from here on, there is only manifestation! This is so because the state evolution has reached is the state of a perfect cosmic unrest; a state that allows unlimited manifestation of form.

From the undisturbed existence of pure consciousness, a primal alteration happens - it is a kind of distinction. Here, the *First Two*, the Tattwas, the two inseparable yet distinct aspects of existence emerge.

These two Tattwas are the Siva Tattwa and Sakthi Tattwa. They are the beginning of cosmic evolution. Both aspects remain ever present, ever prevalent and cannot exist without the other. They are also known as Purusha (cosmic spirit) and Prakrithi (the cosmic substance)

The entire world is nothing but a manifestation of the cosmic spirit and its substance. Every form, subtle and gross is nothing but this cosmic principle in an assumed or derived state.

“...She assumes a million, million forms...”

Thirumanthiram Verse 1102, Siddha Thirumoolar

The uniqueness prevailing over this universal principle is what undoubtedly mystifies all of existence - One of these two aspects is always more evident than the other.

TWENTY-FIVE TATTWAS

*“HE constructs the Tattwas, twenty and five,
To the life of me that is endless,
Being within the egged womb, He creates;
Knowing what I should be, He assails.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 451, Siddha Thirumoolar

Of all the 96 Tattwas that are born, we now discuss 25. These 25 Tattwas have been segregated into four distinct types for the sake of the reader.

The four distinctive types:

- That which is neither produced nor produces
- That which is not produced but produces
- Those which are produced and do produce
- Those which are produced and do not produce

*“They saw twenty five, who destroyed their birth.
How Purusha entered the body corporeal, none else know;
That which sought the woman’s birth-pit, the bipolar,
In form, twain rushed and fell.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 454, Siddha Thirumoolar

Purusha or the Siva Tattwa belongs to the first type - That which, is neither produced nor produces. It is the Cosmic Spirit, the unevolved and that which does not evolve. It is the uncaused, unborn and that which is not the cause of any new mode of being. Purusha is the soul of the universe and of all living beings; the animating principle that breathes life into matter, the source of consciousness.

*“He bestowed the Truth of His
Immanence to the world.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 167, Siddha Thirumoolar

The active or more evident aspect, Prakrithi, or the Sakthi Tattwa is the second type of Tattwa - That which is not produced but produces. It is also the unevolved but it is from which evolution does come forth. Prakrithi is the original substance from which all things have come and to which all things will return. It is the primary nature of both, the animate and inanimate - the primary nature of all existence.

Prakrithi, the cosmic substance, is comprised of three constituents or forces called Gunas. Each guna is a derived aspect of existence and yet is never separate from the origin itself. A Guna remains distinct in its characteristics and functions accordingly.

The three Gunas (forces) are Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas Guna.

Sattwa Guna is of illumining character. It has the quality of equilibrium and manifests as Light.

Rajas Guna has the quality of activity, excitement and manifests as the nature of movement.

The nature of Tamas Guna is inertia or darkness and has a restraining quality.

THE NEED FOR COSMIC UNREST

As long as the three Gunas or cosmic properties are in a perfect state of balance no further evolution is possible. Unless and until the three Gunas are not disturbed into a state of imbalance nothing new is born. This is because only when the three gunas are put into a state of imbalance, do their inherent functions and characteristics come into interplay and by this combined act they turn into causative factors for further evolution.

The Rajas Guna gets activated with the intention of making Sattwa Guna or Light manifest as the true nature of everything, but the restraining nature of Tamas Guna comes into play, influencing the play of energy and solidifying the consciousness into distinctive forms.

The process for un-manifest energy to come into subtle and then distinctive gross forms happens at the further evolution of Tattwas. As a total, the Siddhas have described them to be 96 in number.

*“In two kinds of body thus God shaped;
If I speak the subtlety of one that is subtle;
Sound, touch, form, taste and smell,
Buddhi, Mana, and Ahamkara are!”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2123, Siddha Thirumoolar

The third type of tattwa emerges from within the inherent movements of Rajas Guna. The imbalance spontaneously brings forth the state of Chittam.

Chittam is the 'whole' that carries the states of Mahat, Ahamkara, and Manas. Mahat is the Cosmic Intelligence born from the disturbance caused in the equilibrium of the Gunas and gives distinct direction to ongoing evolution. Ahamkara is the Cosmic 'I' sense and Manas is the Cosmic Mind.

*“...of the organs stated eight,
First five are Indriyas, three are Karanas”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2124, Siddha Thirumoolar

Derived from the consciousness of Manas at this stage of evolution are the Indriyas, ten in number. These are the ten forces or capacities - five of Knowing and Cognition and the other five of Action, called the Gnanendriyas and Karmendriyas respectively. These have been tabulated below for easy reading.

GNANENDRIYAS - senses of knowing		KARMENDRIYAS - senses of working
1	Power to hear	Power to express
2	Power to feel	Power to procreate
3	Power to see	Power to excrete
4	Power to taste	Power to grasp
5	Power to smell	Power to move

The Tanmatras also simultaneously come into existence at this very stage, as they are the essence of all objects in their subtle and un-manifest forms. Without the Tanmatras or subtle elements of Prakrithi, the ten Indriyas would have no function to perform.

The Tanmatras are:

The essence of sound
The essence of touch
The essence of form
The essence of flavour
The essence of odour

*“Indriyas ten, ten too their Tanmatras;
Secretly working Vayus ten,
The Anthakarnas four, and Purusha, the experient Jiva;
All these again and again entangle,
In waking consciousness.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2144, Siddha Thirumoolar

In our journey through evolution so far, all has been on the un-manifest realms of existence. Now, an increase in the Tamas Guna and the implementation of its restraining nature, causes the un-manifest essence to now become manifest as the Mahabhutas, the five elements. These are the acting vehicles for all Tanmatras to manifest and express.



EVOLUTION COMES TO A REST

The ongoing evolution comes to rest at the Mahabhutas, the five elements of nature:

Ether (Akash, Akayam),
Air (Vayu, Vali),
Fire (Tejas, Thee),
Water (Appu, Neer), and
Earth (Prithivi, Nilam)

The five Mahabhutas evolute and emerge one from the other in a successive manner. According to the cosmic order of creation, each and every Mahabhuta is born with its own specific and distinctive characteristic in addition to the characteristic nature it inherits and carries forward from the previously evolved Mahabhuta. In other words, each one is born denser or grosser than the previous.

Ether (Akash, Akayam):

Ether has the principle of vacuity, a vast emptiness.

Having the special property of sound, it can be heard but cannot be felt, seen, tasted or smelt; i.e. a clear sound has no touch, no form, no flavour, nor odour. It is sound beyond the array of the other four senses.

Air or wind (Vayu, Vali):

Air has the principle of motion.

It functions as pressure or impact. Air's own property of touch joins the general quality of sound Air inherits from Ether; therefore it can be both felt and heard; i.e. as a gust of pure wind or air that has both touch and sound but is still beyond form, flavour and odour, i.e. it cannot be seen, tasted or smelt.

Fire (Tejas, Thee):

Fire has the principle of luminosity.

Fire has the special property of form. It also carries the general qualities of touch and sound inherited from the earlier elements. Fire, therefore can be seen, felt and heard. For instance, a pure blue flame has form, touch and sound but is still beyond flavour or odour; therefore, it can neither be tasted nor smelt.

Water (Appu, Neer):

Water has the principle of liquidity.

The Water element functions as contraction. Its own special property is flavour. But, Water has also inherited the general qualities of form, touch and sound from its ascendant elements; so water can be tasted, seen, felt and heard. But a glass of pure water is beyond the quality of odour, as it cannot be smelt.

Earth (Prithvi, Nilam):

Earth has the principle of solidity.

Its function is cohesion and special property is odour. This is of course in addition to the general qualities of flavour, form, touch and sound. Therefore, the Earth element can be smelt, tasted, seen, felt and heard. For instance, a rose has odour, flavour, and form, touch and sound and thus Earth is the only element that can be known by all the five senses.

The relation of the five Mahabhutas, or sense particulars to one another:

The five Mahabhutas and their individual modality:

Akayam	Ether	has sound
Vali	Air	has sound and touch
Thee	Fire	has sound, touch and form
Neer	Water	has sound, touch, form and flavour
Nilam	Earth	has sound, touch, form, flavour & odour

After these five Mahabhutas emerge, there is no further need for evolution and nothing new is created or born. Everything subtle to the most gross and tangible manifests from here itself!

All manifestation is nothing but a derived state of these five elements.

All things manifest have undergone this very cosmic phenomenon of evolution until it has come to rest in its own modified state of the inseparable, yet distinctive Mahabhuta Tattwas.

Therefore,

All manifestation also has to undergo the cosmic phenomenon of involution in order to fall back and rest in its origin, the Source.

This process of creation and dissolution of the macro cosmos is individualised as the micro cosmos or Human Beings! The creation of a micro cosmos is no different from the macro.

*“What takes place in the macrocosm,
Holds good in the microcosm.”*

Avvai Kural, chapter 10, Verse 9

Likewise, for us humans to realise our true nature can happen only by undertaking the quest of transcending every evolutionary stage until 'falling-back' into the origin, the Source.

All manifestation also has to undergo the cosmic phenomenon of involution to fall back and rest in its origin, the Source.

*"Where Tattwas are, the Lord of Tattwas is,
Where Tattwas are not, the Lord of Tattwa is not.
Having realised the nature of Tattwa Gnana,
The Lord of Tattwas would there emerge!"*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2818, Siddha Thirumoolar

THE PHENOMENA

We end this chapter with an instance illustrating the vitality and chief participation of Tattwas even in the most, simplest of occurrences!

Let us for a moment imagine a lorry speeding along the road. The form of the lorry, through our eyes enters the mind. The mind's first function proves to be only a receptacle that receives the image and registers it.

The same mind then functions as the intellect and becomes aware of this image and cognises it as 'lorry', in the light of its already held previous knowledge. Actually, the intellect has nothing to do with the external object - the lorry. It only manipulates or interacts with the image registered in the mind. The intellect then with its inherent qualities of Raga (attachment) and Dwesha (aversion) interprets as either good or bad, for the Ego: *'something is happening in the external world. I am directly concerned with it. I must do something about it.'*

This feeling of 'I-ness' is called as Ego.

'If the lorry is speeding against me, I will perform the action of running to safety on the side of the road. If the lorry is speeding away in any other direction, then I will do no action.' The Ego sense: *'I am directly concerned with the speeding of the lorry towards me and my life is in danger will alone prompt me to act and run.'*

The mind, the intellect and the Ego are different Vasana colours. Therefore, the intellect determines what to do: *to run to a safe side on the road.* The mind gives the order to the Karmendriyas, the organs of action, legs. The muscles of the leg expand and contract and the legs do the running.

MAN - THE FIVE ELEMENTS

*“Andathil Ulladhu Pindam
Pindathil Ulladhu Andam
Andamum Pindamum Ondre
Arinthu Than Paarkkum Pothu”*

The translation:

*“Whatever is in the macrocosm is in the microcosm;
Whatever is in the microcosm is in the macrocosm.
Macrocosm and microcosm are one
When you look in right understanding”*

Siddha Sattaimuni

Let us once again travel the route of cosmic evolution, this time within a human individual.

According to the system of Siddha Tantra, the universe originally consisted of subtle atoms that contribute to the five basic elements: Earth Water, Fire, Air, and Ether. These correspond to the five senses of the human body and are the fundamentals of all corporeal things in the world. A close relationship is found to exist between the external world and the internal system of man. Siddhars declare the human form to be a miniature world in itself.

If we travel as an onlooker into the human body starting from the outside, we find Earth is the first obvious element. It gives the fine shape to the body. It includes bones, tissues, muscles, skin, hair, etc.

Water is the second element and is represented by blood, gland secretions, vital fluids etc within the body.

Fire is the third element and facilitates digestion of, physical food, mental impressions and experiences; it also imparts emotion, vigour, vitality and intelligence to the physical system.

Air helps in the absorption of the digested energy and is responsible for circulation, stimulation and the respiratory and nervous systems.

Above all, Ether characterises man's mental and spiritual faculties.

A suitable proportion of these five elements in combination with each other work harmoniously to produce a healthy organic mechanism, without which life is not possible.

THE MUTATIVE ELEMENTS

ELEMENTS	COLOURS	RATIO	SENSES	ACTION
ETHER	Spadigam (crystal white)	$\frac{1}{2}$	Ears	Sound
AIR	Black	$\frac{3}{4}$	Nose	Smell
FIRE	Red	1	Eyes	Sight
WATER	White	1-1/4	Tongue	Taste
EARTH	Golden & Light green	1-1/2	Skin	Touch

According to the intrinsic nature of the five elements, each one is derived from the other and therefore eternally inter-related, inter-connected and inseparable. This inter-connectedness allows flexibility in their inherent proportions as in different ratios and combinations but never is an element non-existent. In other words, never can a single element be taken into account separately and apart from the others. Wherever there is one element in the body, the other four elements are also found well represented in combination with the others.

The elements stand classified into two halves, namely physical and subtle. The subtle ones are further subdivided into two equal parts, of which one is retained and the other is once again subdivided into four equal parts. This is the phenomenon of 'Panchi Karna Vidya', based on which the Science of Siddha Medicine, Siddha Alchemy and the Swara Yoga applications came into existence.

Panch Bhuta (Five Elements)

*To envision the details of the Tattwas
Listen! I tell you lovingly with compassion*

*Follow the five elements, that I speak
Earth, Water, Fire*

*The connecting Wind and Ether
Cohesively entwined as elements, five*

*Finding well by your mind's eye
Adhere well, the obvious element!*

25

Gnanendriyam (Organs of Knowing)

*Preserving the five elements itself
If you envision with mind's eye, by converged eyes*

*You can sight the growing Mount
The way to Chathura Giri would appear*

*Then assuring, no one is equal to you,
If you surrender and experience the elements*

*The upright Kailash would appear
Listen! The real Gnanendriyam!*

26

*Listen to the Gnanendriyam
Graciously telling you, listen*

*Surotra is ear itself
What is meant by Thokku, is the body itself*

*The sword like Satchu is eye itself
The great Singu is mouth itself*

*Agirana, the foot like, is nose itself
These are the compassionate Gnanendriyam!*

27

*Thus, such five Gnanendriyam, itself
Look at them with the gracious mind's eye*

*Experience the five stages satisfactorily
If you establish in the abode of the Guru*

*Without over-lapping, then Vaasi would self exist
And abide in the wisdom of light*

*Finding refuge in those five stages
Then listen to the Karmendriyam!*

28

Karmendriyam (Organs of action)

*Listen, the Tongue, Feet, Hand
Excretory and Generative organs*

*All of these five are Karmendriyam
If they became pure*

*The path of wisdom, never be in vain
If you find clarity in these five*

*No more evil, and the Vaasi would raise
So focus upon the five organs, intensely!*

29

Aaimpulam (Five senses)

*Listen now to see the Aaimpulam
Along with the Sabda, the Sparsa, the Roopa*

*The Rasam and the Skanda, these five
The pleased Aaimpulam, as called*

*Coherently sensing the Aaimpulam
If you find clarity mindfully*

*It would reveal to you the Siddha in the path
Oh Son! Listen to the analysis of Aaimpulam!*

30

*Analysing each Aaimpulam
Reaching their root-core*

*Visualising the aspect of Vaasi
Climbing in that Vaasi with clarity*

*Reaching the oracle of the cosmos, to engulf it
And if abide there with immaculate awareness*

*To sustain in it further, the need of Anthakarnas
Telling openly, listen!*

31

Anthakarnas (inner instruments)

*Oh the Maharishi Pulasthiya, listen
The gracious faculty of Anthakarnas*

*The Manas without falseness is the one
The sharp Buddhi is another one*

*Listen, the Ahamkaram is the next one
Chittam, the purity of Sivahood, is another*

*Rule these four faculties then
They would function consciously!*

32

*Understand the Atma-tattwa
What I spoke till now is of twenty-four*

*Keeping intent, if you find the merits
Of Atma-tattwa, then the Vaasi would climb*

*Incubate this Vaasi after finding its essence
If sighted the core of Atma-tattwa*

*Who is equal to you, my son
Now you listen to the Vidya-tattwa!*

33

*Speaking the Vidya-tattwa, Listen!
Nothing but the Kala, the Niyathi*

*The covering Kalai, the Vidya
The pleasant Ragam, the Purusha*

*And the Maya, all these are seven
Being aware of Vidya-tattwa for the goodness*

*Obtain the body of space
Then listen to the aspect of Siva-tattwa!*

34

*Listen to the nature of Siva-tattwa
Oh my gracious Pulasthiya, carefully*

*Oh son! The ruling Suddha-Vidya, Iswara
Then the Sadakya, Sakti and Siva*

*All these five are called Siva-tattwas
This order of thirty-six Tattwas*

*Know as the instruments for body-consciousness
Realising this, oh my son, start to see yourself!*

35

*Focusing on oneself
Observing the source of body-consciousness*

*Standing without waver, then the glory
Of Tattwas would reveal, be mindful*

*If you keep mindfulness in it
The other dependant Tattwas would appear*

*Who would know in the five elements
All those ninety-six Tattwas came into being!*

36

Aspect of Earth

*The derived forms of five elements, listen!
Oh son, the aspects of Earth elements become*

*The Hair, Bone, the Skin
The Tendons of nerves, the Flesh, five total*

*The magnificent aspect of Earth, as told
Understand it and abide in it consciously*

*After this the aspect of Water element
Oh! My good Pulasthiya, focus in it!*

37

Aspect of Water

*Speaking the aspect of Water, to see
The softest Plasma, Blood*

*The coherent Sperm, Brain and Marrow
All these five are the aspects of Water*

*The significance of these Water aspects
You see with clarity, by sensing yourself*

*If you sense them as self awareness
Then I would proceed to the aspect of Fire!*

38

Aspect of Fire

*Listen to the aspect of the Fire element
Nothing but Hunger, the Sleep*

*Overwhelming Copulation, Fear and Laziness
All these total five are aspects of Fire*

*Realising this razor edge Fire aspect
Be mindful of the inner nature of yourself*

*If your mindfulness becomes established
Then it leads to the aspect of Air!*

39

Aspect of Air

*Oh! Listen to the aspect of Air itself
My Pulasthiya! The Walk, the Run*

*The Sitting, along with the Lying down and
The Getting up, all become totally five*

*Understanding the expansive aspects of the air element
Focus on the unfoldment of your inner self further*

*If you focus with the grace of the glorious Guru
Listen to the aspect of Ether!*

40

Aspect of Ether

*Exclusivity of the aspect of Ether itself
Telling you significantly its nature, Listen!*

*The enmity, the possessiveness, the greed
The envy and the pride, all these five*

*Seeing them, how they emerge in the base
If you establish as Self itself*

*The waning Vaasi gets augmented
These are the twenty-five functions of the sacred five!*

41

Ten Nadis

*The five pairs of Nadis, are ten
Will now tell you, listen keenly!*

*Ever-functioning Ida, Pingala, Sulinai
Lustrous Gandhari, Atthi*

*Interiorising Aswini, Alampu, Purudan
Forcible Gudham and the Singuvu*

*All these self-portrayed ten positions
Are the airy aspect of the Earth element itself!*

42

*Regarding the course of the airy aspect of Air
Listen mindfully, will speak its flow*

*The straight Prana, and the Apana
The realistic Udana, and the Samana, Oh Son*

*The non-pouring Viyana, all are five
Have become the fiery Air itself*

*If you find the whirling fiery Air
Then listen to the next elemental Airs!*

43

*Listen to the Nagan, Koormam, my son
Girigaram, Devadattam, Dananjeyan*

*All these are known as the five elemental Airs
Amazing! Experience the directional Air*

*Understanding the base of directional Air
If you abide compassionately in Sivayoga*

*No more evil, all can be accomplished
Now listen to the airy aspect of Ether with intent!*

44

*Oh son! Listen to the airiness of Ether itself
Compassionately speaking, listen attentively!*

*The razor edged Arthaedeana is one
The assorted Yukthiedeana is one*

*The engulfed Ulagaedeana is third
Experiencing the airiness of Ether with clarity*

*Stand in the secret inner whirl
Then understand the source of sound!*

45

*Envision the source of the sound
The intrinsic Vaasanam and Kemanam*

*The straight Visargam, Anandam, all five
Seeing these rooted five, arising from Vaasanam*

*Seeing the core of the rooted support
To follow further the course of other instruments*

*Listen to the matter, now heartfully uttered
...!*

46

*Listen son, the Rajas, the Tamas
And the gracious Satvic characters are three*

*Understanding these three characteristics
Listen to the order of the airy aspect of Vindu*

*The engulfing Sandhi, Madhimai, Vaikari
And Sukuma, all these four are sound*

*Seeing this strata of sound, four itself
Devotionally look at the base itself!*

47

*Find in this base itself
The internal thirty-six physical instruments*

*Combined with external sixty instruments
If you see clearly the internal and the external*

*Those appearing ninety-six tattwas
Can be experienced in your heart itself*

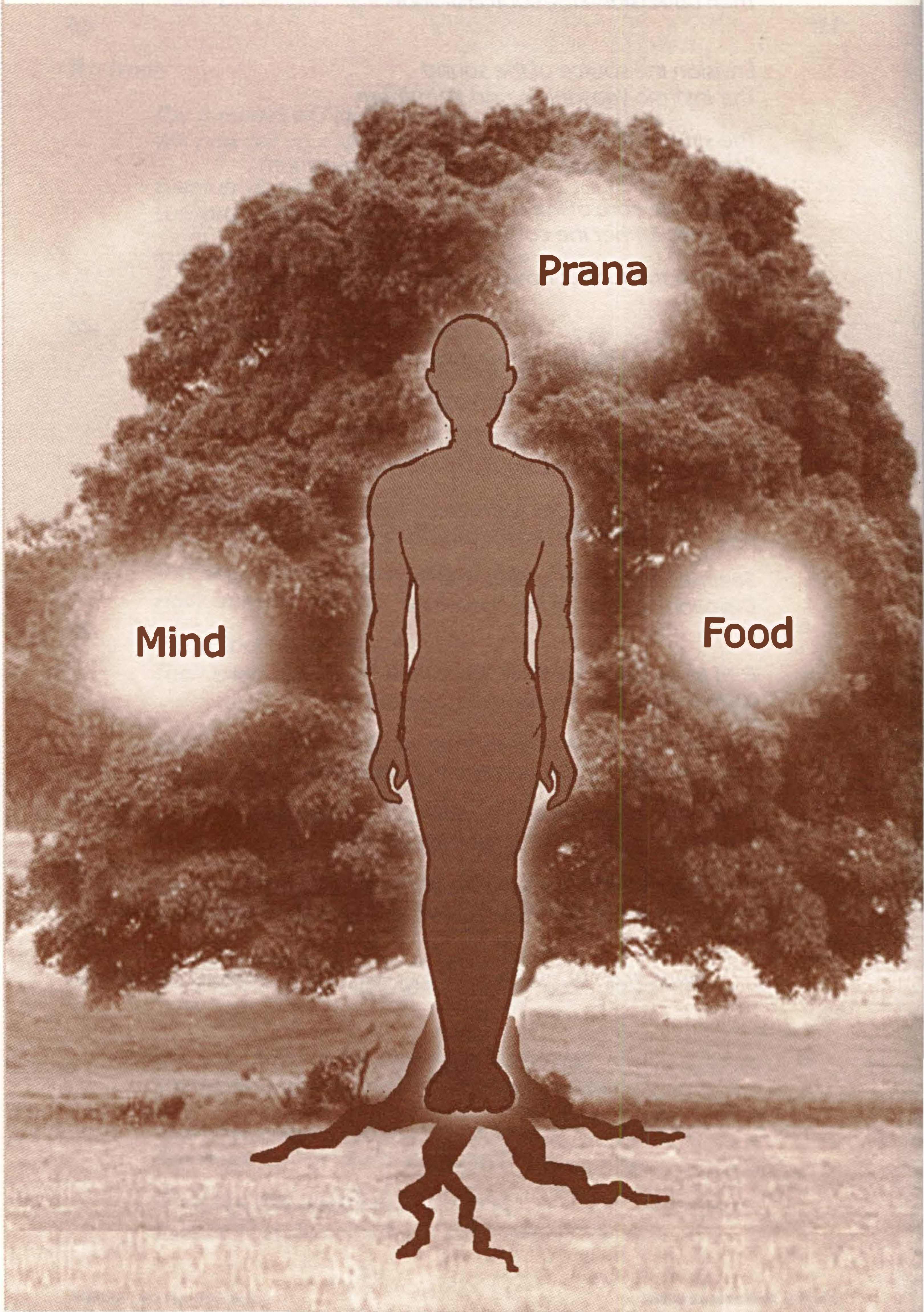
*They are nothing at all, just the garbage of tattwas
The divine game of Pathi, Pasu and Pasa, between themselves!*

48

-Verses 25 to 48 from Saumiya Sagaram 1200, by Siddha Sage Agasthiyar



Tree of Life - Branches



Prana

Mind

Food

MEDICINE OF THE SAGES

The Siddha and Ayurveda systems represent the antiquity of ancient medicinal tradition prevalent here in the Indian subcontinent. The Indian government and other researchers of the South Indian antiquity recognise Ayurveda to be approximately 6000 years old and the Siddha system as nearly 10,000 years old.

As per the ongoing Oral Lineage, the ancient Siddhas entrusted their erudite and enlightened disciples the sacred teachings that unfolded through their yogic visions. This is how the Siddha tradition arose - from the ever so ancient Oral Tradition. Later, some entrusted disciples wrote the healing techniques and teachings handed down to them as commentaries on palm scripts and some encoded original teachings by their expanded knowledge, just as they were, without alteration. By and by, the Siddhas, through their growing lineage inaugurated a very long Healing and Spiritual history for the thousands of years to come to save all humanity.

The Siddha system is reverentially considered as a 'Karpaga Vriksha'; a Desire Tree, as it holds in its imperial vastness all things knowable and all things experiential, by Man; it deals with all Existence. If spoken in human terms it deals with both, mundane necessities and spiritual realisations. However, the medicinal dimension is considered as the first vital door to this mystic tradition and shines as its hallmark.

The ancient healing systems fell out of use only most recently - in the century dominated by the British rule. Over and above the Siddha and Ayurveda systems, South Asia has also seen the presence of the Unani system of medicine, which was another factor contributing to their decline. Scholars of Arabia and of other parts of the near east brought the Unani system into India and it rose to prominence during the period of the Mogul Empire. Although all of these medicinal systems were in use around much of the same period, there was never a clash between the Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems, as their fundamental principles are one and the same.

By the early century, the ruling British introduced western medicine in a big way into India, together with improved sanitation and the control of infectious and childhood diseases. Western medicine or Allopathy grew increasingly popular together with the shift to the British educational system and along side the other social changes that took place over those years. Meanwhile, in

the West, as technology saw new advances, the understanding of human physiology and the cellular metabolic pathway surfaced with a different dimension under the allopathic approach of treating acute diseases. Allopathic medicine was designed in compact forms; was more presentable and most importantly was fast-acting. The beginning of capsules and sterile injectibles changed the entire perception of the people. And as their fascination and trust fast swayed towards allopathic medicine, the Native Vaidyas of Ayurveda, the Native Maruthuvars of the Siddha system and the Hakims of the Unani system; all in all, the 'Healing village Grandmas', who were once seen as divine, were now considered increasingly primitive. Ever since, the doctors of modern medicine in cities have grown in number, while the number of traditional healers has dwindled.

Absorbed in modern technology and miracles of another kind we lost sight of our trust, faith and even our knowledge of the extraordinary healing powers inherent within our own human body-mind-spirit. As we continue to invest in the miracle of technology, parallelly we de-invest in the infinite miracles of our humanness.

Since many a long years the ancient medicinal treasure trove of the Siddhas acts as the bedrock of all medicine and still survives through the hands of Native Healers the Vaidyas and Maruthuvars living in villages or other rural places. Just as some people are said to be born with a green thumb, these people are born healers, hailing from the generation of Vaidyas who pass on the sacred art, the expert eye and the finely attuned sensitivity that makes healing a natural response instead of an analytical science. The democratic system of, the curing and healing of Nature (man), by Nature (herbs and plants), and for Nature, (the balance of body-mind) has served many a generations well and continues to do so.

You needn't search very far for a Native Healer and neither do you need to go to a modernised clinic or hospital where the final bill itself deposits you into regressive shock. Such a healer could turn out to be your next-door neighbour, your colleague in the office or the simpleton living in the humble shack at the end of a pot-holed lane!

These chosen custodians are ones who keep the Siddha healing tradition alive by keeping the faith of millions even in today's day where man doubts first, listens later and then if at all, believes. In today's time and age highest importance is given to technical aspects, which is devoid of any kind of trust in Nature and everything turns out as a fashion. The new age echoes a question... 'Why do we need God?' As a response, we can start by rephrasing their own question, 'Why do we need parents?'



The root meaning of the word Siddha is 'Chi' or Consciousness, which itself establishes the aim of the medicinal dimension of this most ancient Indian Siddha system and Tradition

To dissolve the veil of ignorance that shadows the illumination of pure consciousness.

Ancient wisdom of these Siddha Sages describes these veils to be none other than our physical ailments and diseases; our mental blocks; the various abnormalities; the pranic disorders and last but not the least, the Primal Ignorance of our existence. And through Their medicinal dimension, our compassionate Ancestors have disclosed the sacred keys to dissolve these veils of illusion curtaining our true nature and guide us to abide as pure consciousness.

To try and describe the working nature of the Siddha system is easy, for most other theories work with the confined aim of reducing the suffering of the human body. But, the Siddha medicinal system interacts and addresses all aspects of our being with equal depth and emphasis. In other words, it is the 'Medicine of the Sages.'

We have already read about how everything manifest is composed of the five elements. The food we eat is no different and is an array of these five elements. Every food carries the qualities of different elements so when we eat it, it influences and nourishes our body, mind and consciousness. And accordingly, its influencing qualities classify food into Satvic food, Rajasic food and Tamasic food.

In other words, our physical body as well as our mental constitution are touched by the influence of the three Gunas (Sattwa, Rajas, Tamas) through the food we eat.

Satvic food keeps the body light and gives mental clarity.

Rajasic Food provokes excessive activity in the body and makes the mind state agitated.

Tamasic food generates heaviness in the body and dullness of mind.

Food plays a vital role in determining our daily health and state of mind. Since it is an external factor, it allows us the possibility of consciously changing and choosing our diet to influence ourselves. One could start and first aim to neutralise the abnormalities arising in the state of our mind or attend to any discomforting signals our body may be sending out by gradual changes in ones diet. Then the diet can once again be re-designed to enhance the natural healing process within the body and mind.

For instance, an individual's suffering from chronic depression, dullness and lethargy could be due to an imbalance in his diet such as an excess intake of Tamasic food. This can be corrected by gradually making the required dietary changes in the following manner. After examining the diet, the imbalance can be first neutralised by introducing Rajasic foods as its qualities remove the restraining tendencies or tamasic qualities. Soon the individual should experience freedom from the continued dullness of Tamasic nature and begin to enjoy the newly acquired briskness generated by Rajasic food. As a next, this should be appropriately stabilised, balanced and most importantly, sustained by introducing Satvic food into the diet. A prolonged intake of Satvic food evokes freshness, enthusiasm, lightness, calmness and clarity in ones being as Satva is the harmonious and integrated blend of Rajas and Tamas. Not only should our daily diet be appropriate to the state of our mind and body constitution but must resonate even with the changing climate, season and the environment around us.



The core teachings of the ancient Siddhas speak of humans losing their primordial energy by depending on the temporal. *Immaculate primordial energy wanes when the temporal energy waxes.* On birth, a child receives its nourishment through breastfeeding. This is its first form of acquiring temporal energy. In this way, a human acquires his energy majorly through his dependence on food.

The quality of a human's dependence on food and how this food influences him makes him either healthy or ill. In this fashion, the food we eat is the doorway to various influences.

The unique and distinctive hallmarks of the medicinal aspect of Siddha Tradition have taken shape based on this fundamental understanding. Each of these Hallmarks has a distinct exclusivity and are eternal underlying principles on which even the present day Native Healers continue to rely. The Siddha Masters of medicine not only show us the influence food has but they also show us how to employ this external factor and use it to heal instead of harm. Their revelations in this regard cover all aspects of an individuals being and are detailed to the extent of unveiling the ignorance withholding an individual's true nature from himself. But first let us look at the hallmark of the Siddha system of Medicine.



HALLMARK OF THE SIDDHA SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

Apart from the rock bed of Siddha tradition, there is also Ayurveda, which is popularly known as the science of Life. The preliminary founders of the Ayurvedic Science were Sage Charaka and Sage Susrutha. Their works give abundant information on the nature of the human body; the diseases related to it; its healing processes; the herbal preparation and ofcourse, lifestyle regimes. But, I would like to highlight here that none of their works and writings mention the medicinal use of minerals and metals. We can therefore confer that the medicinal use of metals and minerals was yet not present in the preliminary period of Ayurveda.

After the primary period, a great alchemist by the name of Siddha Nagarjuna was known to come and reside in North of India, bringing with him the vast knowledge and mastery of alchemy. This initiated the use of healing metals in the system of Ayurveda. Siddha Nagarjuna originally hailing from Andhra Pradesh devotedly followed the Siddha path and attained Siddhahood.

This is why, although absent from texts of early periods, we do find the mention of this profound facet in texts of later periods and is flourishing as common practice ever since.

So, we cannot restrict the crucial distinguishing factor of Siddha Medicine just to the medicinal use of metals and poisons after its suitable detoxification.

Anupana (Adjuvant)

The hallmark of Siddha Medicine also includes another salient feature: *the utilisation of one medicine to heal and cure more than one disease only by altering the Anupana - the carrier or medium with which the actual medicine is to be taken.*

Muppu (Universal Salt)

Over and above all, I would like to highlight yet another hallmark - *the preparation and application of the 'Universal Salt'.* In other traditions of the world, the Universal Medicine is known as the Philosopher Stone, Elixir or Panacea.

Ancient wisdom of the Siddhas says that all manifestation inherently comprises of a dual character - a life giving aspect and a life destroying aspect, called as Amritha Pakam and Nanju Pakam in Tamil, respectively.

If you recall, in the chapter Creation of Tattwas, Prakrithi has been described to obscure the Purusha aspect. She veils the single sense, the sentient aspect, using her multi-sense forms. This is no different from how the Nanju aspect (life-destroying) flourishes, curtaining the Amritha (life-giving) aspect, and by this indirectly acts as the impetus for its gain in momentum. In other words, both aspects are the same energy working in a fashion complimentary to each other, within a single pathway or mode. The Life-giving aspect nurtures life with its balanced healing tendency whereas the life-destroying aspect generates imbalance to bring deterioration. This apparent contradiction only appears so and in truth is a complimentary function as both aspects are from the one Source. The Siddhas applied this very cosmic law to spiritual realms and incorporated it in their illustrated panoramic view, describing Maya or illusion as eternal, inherent and as vast as Spirit or Purusha.

So, even though it is Maya obscuring perception and veiling one's true silent spirit or Purusha from oneself, it is verily only She who can bestow the blessings and grace for realising IT.

Similarly, on the dissolution or removal of the poisonous aspect (Nanju Pakam), the Amritha aspect manifests as the entire and whole and occupies the now vacant working space of Nanju Pakkam, the life-destroying aspect. From this instant, the traits of Amritha aspect flourish and express in their entirety, altering the inherent state of each and every material to immaculate vitality, nourishing it and nurturing it with its life-giving expression.

With the intention of initiating and accelerating the process of deriving full healing properties, hidden in all things manifest, the Sages of ancient cults, devised formulae using Universal Salt as catalyst. The Siddhas encoded formulae for purification and for the removal of the poisonous aspect present in each and all, onto palm leaves. They spoke in their revelations of how it alters and transforms the dual character and refines it to its utmost and purest potential.

It is called “Muppu”, which means the Three Salts or Essence and is extensively used in external alchemical preparations of KayaKalpa medicines, for longevity and immortality, by the ancient Siddhas. More of this is explained in ‘ External Alchemy’.

In Ayurveda, these formulae are applied mostly for metallic medicinal preparations whereas in the Siddha system, this process is applied for all preparations, including herbs, spices, metals and minerals as well.

Let us read a little more about certain highly unique purification processes of the Siddha system.

Jayaneer

(Victorious Water)

Let us take for instance mercury! Liquid metal and sulphur are both volatile when under fire. In order to use them for medicinal preparations, especially for incineration techniques, they first need to lose their volatile nature. For this the Siddhas formulated a special preparation called Jayaneer (Victorious Water). This miraculous preparation overrides the influence of the elements of fire, water, and air. In other words, when this specially formulated water is put in contact with fire, it doesn't evaporate!

The Siddhas used this magical preparation to purify many a poisonous materials right down to the atomic level, even mercury itself. When mercury and other volatile substances are mixed and blended with the 'victorious water', they lose their volatile nature for fire. The Siddhas used this alchemical water to reverse or change the nature of different poisons present in each metal and successfully prepare them as medicine, ready and able enough to heal human illnesses *without imposing any ill effects*.

Another preparation that involves the use of Jayaneer even today is the forgotten yet valuable preparation of Kattu (binded) and Kalangu (looks like Tuber) coming from the Siddha system. These preparations have an unimaginable shelf life of a thousand years!



GENETIC WISDOM OF THE SIDDHAS

Not only the food we eat but also our human body is comprised of the five elements in certain predetermined proportions. These elements, permeating amongst themselves, emerge within us as 3 different humors, as three bio-regulating forces that determine our inherent constitution, right at birth. In the Siddha system, this inherent constitution is known by many names such as Dosham, Prakrithi, Mukuttram, Tridosham, etc.

Let us see how the three forces come to be...

In its earliest formative stages, a living body is seen using the principal type of energy, Prana or vital life force to first form a three-layered structure. This structure then develops into the fully formed living body and its inner organs. Medical terminology calls these three layers as the ectoderm, endoderm and mesoderm - the outer layer, inner layer and the middle layer.

The vital purpose for the formation of a body to begin with these three fold layers is because these three are needed for the three-fold bio-regulating forces of the body Vatha, Pitta and Kapha to manifest. These three layers although translucent during the early stages of formation, later turn opaque.

VITAL ANIMATION

Not only the structure of our human body but also the structure of everything in the universe, both visible and invisible, with form and without form, from the single atom to the entire universe, is all formed by the principal life-shaping energy, Prana.

The Divine Creator creates and sustains all realms of Existence from this Primal life force. This matrix of primal patterns builds up our entire Cosmos along with us in it and the connection between us, and Prana is inseparable.

In this interconnected web of primal energy, the Cosmos, Prana bridges everything external and everything internal together as one. So, anything, even our breath, is capable of affecting and altering every other thing.

For instance, place your left index finger on the spot on your wrist just below your right thumb. You can feel your pulse. Now, without removing your index finger hold your breath for a few seconds. That very instant, you will feel a change in the pulse pattern. We can feel for ourselves the diminished pulse rate for the moments we hold our breath in check. The influence is apparent.

Other not so apparent changes also occur during the time we forcibly alter the course of our breath. As soon as the course of the breath changes, the smooth flow of external air within the body is somewhat blocked and the temperature of the inner parts of our body rises a little. This rise in temperature is capable of destroying millions and

millions of microbes within our body. At times, this may even interrupt some bodily functions and bring ill health.

These were examples of the inner impact of restrained breath. What about changes that take place externally in the Cosmos? Just as it did within, this tiny restraint exercised on the breath can also cause damage to the external microbes in the environment.

The effect of any restrain we exercise extends beyond our selves to all over the Universe causing appropriate results or reactions!

Where does this chain reaction end? Only, when it returns, back to us! The formless vital force repeatedly acquires bodies in this world. And when does this cycle end? This cycle of acquiring bodies and taking birth goes on until we attain a state that acquires a liking to remain without a body; as pure vital force, the silent spirit.

This primal cosmic-energy has its own vital significance and pattern. It returns to the source from where it first originates. For one moment, assume that the vital force of the whole universe is retrained just for a few minutes. All of us would perish in a catastrophe! Compared to the immense universe our petty ego is simply nothing. Similarly, compared to our entire body, the countless microbes that inhabit our body are individually nothing.

We are affected by each and every change that takes place in our environment based on the interconnectedness of this energy web.

What is this Primal cosmic energy or Prana?

What is its use?

Energy or Prana is what connects our formless state with our formed state. Just as the life-principle within us makes use of this energy to structure our body, that very life-principle gets freed from the body by the withdrawal of this energy. It operates involuntarily, similar to the involuntary process of our breathing. But the nine gateways (the nine bodily orifices) to the mansion called our body are always open. Then what controls or restrains the ever-operating Prana within us from dissipating through these openings? It is the inbuilt structural principle of the energy pattern of this universe.

Before the formation of different cells in our body, the life force by its own flow first forms a basic structure of invisible channels called Nadis. Depending on this flow, the nadis assume different names.

The central channel, Sushumna Nadi is said to be the Vatha Nadi as it executes the main animating principle.

The Pingala Nadi is said to be the Pitta Nadi as it works the solar principle of giving vitality, growth, metabolism etc to the embryo.

The Ida Nadi, otherwise called as the Kapha Nadi, gives enough nourishment to the bodily organs and keeps the body temperature in check.

Scientists involved in Genetic research are astounded at the complexity of work and its varying nature being performed by the genetic structure programme contained within every cell. Prana, the vital energy creates and maintains this genetic structure, and is in turn maintained by it.

As we have already said, the Primal Creator in His creation of a human body, using Prana first creates the three fold layers or structure before anything else. This grows into a human body. The first three fold structure of Prana is the base upon which the three bio-regulating forces, Vatha, Pitta and Kapha are formed. The three doshas or Tridoshas is what determines the constitution of the human body for that entire lifetime.

The reason I have introduced the vital force and its nature of ever interconnectedness is because the Genetic Wisdom of the Siddhas flourishes from their wholistic understanding of the ever-active Vital Animation. Just as the presiding influence of pranic vital animation determines Cosmic happenings it also takes lead at individual levels - the formation of the microcosm - our human body, by determining the looks and design of the three life shaping forces of a human, Vatha, Pitta and Kapha doshas.

The Siddhas who are well versed with the Nadis (channels) and its inhabitants have revealed to us in their mystic songs the secrets of -

How the foetus is formed,
How the foetus acquires diseases,
How congenital defects are formed,

So on and so forth! Let us see some of these songs...

*“After emission, if the fluid hits five-finger speed,
The infant born lives hundred years;
If the fluid hits four finger width speed,
The infant born lives eighty years...”*

Siddha Thirumoolar, Thirumanthiram, Verse 479

At the time of union, if the male sperm emits with the speed of five-finger width (ancient method of measurement), the lifespan of the baby is determined to be a 100. The speed of emission determines the strength with which the sperm and ovum are bound together as well as the strength of the life force of the baby. So, if the emission is of four-finger width, the age determined is 80. So on and so forth...

*“The Prana pushing the vital flow is short; dwarf baby.
The Prana pushing the vital flow is feeble; handicapped baby.*

*The Prana pushing the vital flow is intermittent; hunchback baby.
All these apply not to the woman."*

Siddha Thirumoolar, Thirumanthiram, Verse 480

The sperm is secreted through a progressive functioning of all the six Thatus (fundamental tissues), at the time of union and cannot be emitted by itself. According to the Siddhas, all our physiological functions get their momentum by the subtly functioning Prana within. At the time of union the Pranic pulsation from the centre of the eyebrows, due to the act of lovemaking gets directed downwards. This pulsating force is what pushes the sperm to emit from the sperm bag. For instance if a person is highly agitated during the sexual act, he would lose his sperm quickly whereas an un-agitated person who is submissive during the lovemaking would sustain prolonged intercourse. This is why in Tantric sexual yoga a centring in the upper realm is advised. It is because one can then understand the real prime mover of all physiological functions is Prana.

If the Prana were a feeble pulsation then the baby is born short. And if it is of an extremely feeble pulsation then the baby is born handicapped. If the Prana that moves the sperm is intermittent and not continuous, the baby is born hunchback. Such conditions of Pranic imbalances apply only for the male partner.

Now let us see how the inner state of the woman partner plays a role in the formation of the baby.

*"In intercourse, if mother's bowels are heavy in stomach; dull baby.
If the mother is holding excess water in stomach; dumb baby.
If both exceed in mother's stomach; blind baby.
Thus, baby being determined according to mother."*

Siddha Thirumoolar, Thirumanthiram, Verse 481

If the woman suffers chronic constipation and an excess of faeces remain stagnant in her intestines, the baby is born dull. Instead of solid faeces if there is excessive water retained in her intestines, the baby is born dumb. And if both are equally present, mixed and in excess, the baby born is blind. Evidently, stagnant faeces within our body produce stale air, which brings us to the Siddhas yogic physiology and their description of how the 10 vital airs play an extremely important role in all bodily functions.

The upward moving vital air is called Prana and the downward moving one is called Apana. Apana is responsible for all acts of bodily elimination such as urination etc. as well as procreation and menstruation. So, the woman's chronic constipation is the result of an imbalance in the downward moving vital air, Apana. The stagnant Apana imbalances even the menstrual cycle. In other words, the stagnant menstrual blood can turn into tiny clots that produce even more stale air. If a woman conceives in this state, all of these subtle

factors with their definite influence affect the foetus and its formation. Siddha Thirumoolar mentions this under the section of Parianga Yoga (sexual yoga) in his work Thirumanthiram and emphasises that a woman should cleanse her stomach one day prior to union.

The following songs are self-explanatory...

*“At union,
If the breath flows through right nostril; male baby.
If breath flows through left nostril; female baby.
If Apana opposed Prana; twins.
If breath is equal in both nostrils,
Eunuch there will be.”*

Siddha Thirumoolar, Thirumanthiram, Verse 482

*“If male and female partners’ breath synchronise,
The infant born will be handsome.
When in both, breath pattern is chaotic,
No conception will there be.”*

Siddha Thirumoolar, Thirumanthiram, Verse 483

Apart from these Yogic insights from Siddha Thirumoolar, other Siddhas also elucidate on these organising forces as well as on the human mind-set and how it determines the foetus formation in their various works. Some of them have been listed below:

- If union on the day of New moon and conception too, then the baby will have discolouration or four or six fingers.
- If the male partner returns from a long and tiring journey and there is immediate union and conception too, the baby will be a dullard.
- The next day after New moon, if there is union and conception too, then the baby will have a nature of habitual lying.
- On the third day after New moon if there is union and conception too, then the baby will have a short life span.
- If there is union on the day of full moon and conception too then the baby will have physical deformities.
- If there is union on the next day after full moon and conception too then the baby will have a long life after he crosses over several threats to his life in his/her early years.
- If there is union and conception on the 15th day, the baby will suffer leucoderma (white spots), black discolouration or ailments related to Vatha imbalance.

- At the time of union, if both partners are engaged in perverse speech the baby will be a eunuch.
- If union and conception takes place during early afternoon on a Friday the baby born will squint in one eye.

The Siddha system of medicine comprises of different fundamental hypotheses or ancient facts that don't change!

...that's what I thought.

Initially, it was only theoretical data for me and my experience was dry and lacking in relevance to me. Missing any personal involvement, I obviously didn't experience any resultant unfolding...until I met my teacher. After which a whole new vista of the healing aspect of the Siddha system unravelled before me...



SELF REFERRAL

According to the typical traits of my Pitta nature, I was always curious... always with a questioning mind.

During the time of what we can refer to as my quest in the Siddha path, I was in acquaintance with a few native Vaidyas with whom I would spend a lot of my time. I would watch them work rigorously through the day and night preparing medicines, mixing, grinding herbs. Although they answered most of my questions, I still didn't know the underlying principles supporting this ancient healing system. Such a question could never occur to these native Vaidhiyas because for them the preparation of medicines etc was customary - handed down from generation to generation.

At this time, I would also frequently visit Chandrashekhar Swami. It was a long journey from home; all the way to Erode. He had several assistants working for him. I would visit as frequently as I could as Swami never allowed me to stay there with him. After several such visits, I recall being determined to stay longer. Surprisingly enough, Swami allowed it. Before I reached, I had already been travelling long. I had visited two other temples and then taken a long bus journey to Erode. Once I got there, I was so eager and curious that I immediately got involved in watching all the things going on at Swami's place. Lots of people were waiting for healing consultations of all kinds... some for their lowered spirit and some for physical illnesses. I longed to see how he sensed each person who came to him and how he would help him/her. I was also eager to see how his assistants' worked to help him and others in preparing native Siddha preparations. I behaved like a complete window shopper

and not even because I wanted to learn anything in particular. I didn't even know what I was looking for. I spent my first two days like this.

By the third day, I felt a little under the weather. A runny nose, burning sensations, but my curiosity didn't allow me to let up. I wanted to spend all my time watching everything that went on. By the fifth day I was burning with fever - completely bed ridden. Of course several of the assistants came over to me and proposed all sorts of herbal preparation that could help but strangely enough not even one of them brought one to me and neither did Swami attend to me. So I just lay there tired and weak. A day later Swami called out to me, 'go outside, there is a plant'. I weakly hobbled out. And there it was. I saw a plant that hadn't been there a few days ago. The assistants also gathered around and expressed their amazement at the sudden appearance of this plant. Firstly, this plant was not common to this area and secondly it wasn't even the proper season for it. How did it get there? Swami asked one of the assistants to take a part of the plant and prepare a decoction from it, which I was then given to drink. When one of the assistants asked Swami, 'how did this plant suddenly grow here? Swami teasingly retorted, 'don't you know, Pal Pandian sir has come to our place...'

Swami Chandrashekhar is a healer hailing from the lineage of Siddha Gorakkar. He is a channel for the healing steam and if ever any of his students tended to hang on to his personality, he promptly trampled it. He definitely didn't look like any of our popular candyfloss, all smiles teachers!

I couldn't remain calm and instantly asked him, 'but you didn't give an answer for Chandra's question (his assistant).' He asked me, 'you don't have this question within you?'

'Nature knows you!' was what Swami said to me. This hit me hard, both, Swami's words and the sudden appearance of the plant! Swami explained and I gradually came to understand how it had all come to be. I had travelled a long distance because of which a lot of heat had been generated in my body. On arriving there, I had immediately gotten involved with all the activities around me. In fact, Swami said that in the first two days itself my throat had been dry and burning. But I had ignored it. After which, my body had sent off louder signals calling my attention but I had let that too pass unnoticed.

At this point with no other option left, 'Nature Alarms you! He said.' Yes, nature alarms you for you to finally understand your personal boundaries and what it means to protect yourself from influences, external demands or from your obsessive activities that don't really support growth in your life.

The ancient Siddhas describe Nature as an endless flowing phenomena; always changing, always moving. This is Her inherent nature. And when this river flow of existence experiences a block, it responds by an alarm! We have already seen how several of our insensitive acts hamper the flow of Mother Nature and result in frightening natural calamities. Our bodies are not separate from this river flow of existence and its inherent principle. The ancient Masters declare disease and illnesses a result of our own insensitivity and ill health the undeniable evidence of us persistently turning a deaf ear to what our bodies have to say.

The Siddhas call this river flow of natural existence that nurtures life as 'Vaasi' (living) and the blocks as 'Viyadhi', (deviated from own nature), disease. There are 16 circulatory channels in the body responsible for the formation, transportation or elimination of certain material in the body. Three channels are for intake, such as: respiration, digestion and the intake of fluids. The next three channels are for elimination such as: urination, defecating and sweating. The next seven channels are one each for the fundamental seven tissues of our body, and the remaining for the mind. The body of a woman has extra channels meant for the menstrual flow and breast secretions. The circulatory channels within our body include the functions of mind as well as emotions and integrate this relationship as body-mind-spirit.

I asked Swami, 'what do you mean, Nature knows you? She doesn't know all of us?'

He smiled,

'Of course She knows. What I mean by Nature knows you, is that Nature responds to you. She will respond to those who live as Nature. You can live in Nature only by loving Her. Life is a journey, the journey of a spiritual being going through a human experience. Humans forgot to identify with the language of the Universe and feel the abundance that Nature so unstintingly shares. The frogs, the birds, the falling leaves, the wind... all have something to say to you. Pal, you have forgotten how to listen! From a new dimension of awareness, you can actually listen to silence and be with yourself with great ease, without the typical itch of always on the move and always trying to stay ahead of schedule and demands. We owe it to them! By listening to them and to ourselves we ensure and create an environment where they are nurtured and recognized; preventing them from being pushed into obscurity by the overwhelming human aggressive misuse.

When you listen to the language of Nature, you will soon feel you are part of the grand Universe of life and also inextricably connected to the physical dimensions of life by being in your body. The energy pervading all over the living Universe is embodied and rooted in

physical form and life and as it nurtures your spirit-mind-body each and every moment, your connection with it nurtures it more.

Yes, it is Life. Inside each of us is an oceanic rhythm that aspires to live; a rhythm whose pulse animates us; this life-pulse is called 'Vaasi' by the Siddhas. Any block or fixation to this life-sustaining pulse manifests as disease. Dis-ease simply indicates how we have mis-conceived our inspiration and in what way we have mis-aligned it in our actions. This is what spiritual traditions are concerned with by their philosophical teachings; in other words... 'being and becoming'

Self referral! To listen and attend to our inner calls cannot be kept as a farfetched conceptualised theory and can only be lived as an attitude, a natural way of being. But, our modern day high strung lives are crowded with demanding commitments making it easy to drop 'self-referral' and replace it with an object-oriented mentality... which brings in the stress, the fatigue, the disorders and chronic conditions.

For example:

It is possible that a typical desk job can be met with something other than a workaholic approach. A stretch or two, frequent drinks of water, resting the eyes on some greenery, plants or something refreshingly natural can easily allow you to attend to mundane activities with a marked difference. Working with an object oriented mentality sooner or later turns into a pressure generator whereas working through self-referral grows into an extension of ones energy.

We must frequently reconnect with our selves; snap our connection with the demanding external situations and tune in to ourselves. The strength of our detachment from the demanding external scenario is proportional to the strength of our sensitivity to maintain the inner-focus of our inspiration to live. Whenever you find yourself exasperated, tense and completely off the centre, simply become sensitive to your inner inspiration-level. The only silver lining is that the aspiration to express, which lurks between our inspiration and our actions, is what keep us creative and healthy in this multifaceted fast track world. The sustained awareness of our inspiration within and during all activity is Self Healing and transcends stressful situations that often demand one to live as an off centred person.

While living with Chandrasekhar Swamiji, several experiences got me wondering more and more about the underlying principles of the ancient healing system. The resources available in the ancient times were very different from the ones used today. There were never any instruments, gadgets, machines, gauges, etc and yet the healing system took birth and flourished widely within those available resources.

If you come with me, with a little visualisation I can take you to that ancient era...

Living in the time of B.C. if you were physically or emotionally ill and in need of healing you would have travelled to some far away ashram or healing shrine that is either on a hill, inside a cave, on the banks of a river or in a rural village. Your decision to travel would not have been casual because back then healing was a sacred process a communion with oneself and the Sages. After consulting friends and a physician, you would have prepared to leave for the healing shrine. The travel itself would have lasted several days and would get filled with stories of miracle cures from those returning home. With rising hopes and expectations, you would arrive at the gates of the Sage's ashram. On arrival you would have to begin the process of purification by ways of cleansing and fasting; a symbolic shedding of toxic attitudes and unhealthy conditionings due to improper habits of daily life. From this point, you become part of a dynamic and varied healing environment. Strolling in the Sages ashram or healing shrine you would enjoy the beautiful gardens and the graceful and serene statues, the great sculptures. Being immersed in the moisturising medicated herbal oil tub bath or in the spring or river would rejuvenate your body. Wandering minstrels would lift your spirit and you would participate in lively spiritual dialogues that would resolve your intellectual crisis and challenge you to consider an alternate perspective to your current life situation. Devotional bhajans and songs would expand your vision of life and chanting the holy mantras would remind you of your inner centring. Day by day, freed from the stress and pulls of daily life and focusing on your diet, massage, relaxation, self-examination, rejuvenation and inner grounding, you would experience a gradual return in energy and vitality.

Finally, the day would arrive when you feel restored and filled with a sense of wholeness, balance and harmony; ready for your return. Engrossed in activities for body, mind and spirit you would have learnt about yourself and developed new attitudes and behaviours healthy and life-supporting ones. All of this would bring into you an empowered meaning to live your life.

For our Ancients the Cosmos was their laboratory and the pulse the modern day stethoscope. The underlying functionality was self-referral and self-sufficient which made it all the more nature-centred and wholistic. The sages lived one with their surrounding; in complete understanding of its working nature. They saw the entire cosmos as a flow of intermingling forces of Nature. From the deep understanding of their cosmic view unfolded the revelation that the nature of the human body is no different from the working cosmos. The human body was equally an outcome of an intermingling of natural forces -

constantly combining, converging and patterning. From the strength of such revelations, they never needed complex terminology or the part wise distinction of cells, bones, organs, etc. The diagnosis was based on wholistic fundamental principles that were the very basis of Natures existence - The Siddhas are the Master's of the Basics.

Coming back to 'self referral', when I say self-referral it is not to be understood as the ego. Self-referral is living in 'Iamness', while Ego is living as 'I am-this and I am-that'. Ego is a fixation, a pseudo-holding centre and an Ego-attitude is an obsessive pre-occupation with our age's long encrusted layers of habitual mental patterning. These layers influence us and turn us into uptight, fearful people of poor discrimination and poor sensitivity mainly because these fixations restrict the flow of our inner inspiration from turning into fluid aspiration for creative actions.

So, whatever we hold in our consciousness is what begins to get attracted to us. This is why all the imbalances that hang in our consciousness begin to afflict us as diseases in the body-mind. When a disease erupts it is an external manifestation of our internal imbalance. It is the result of identifying with an internal issue through a stressful perception over a period.

Our internal state of consciousness is the base of our psychological structure, so before we can heal the disease or issue we first need to become aware of it and understand the way we perceive and identify it. The function of our body that gets deranged when we fall ill reflects the particular deranged functioning of that particular period of our life due to which there is stress and imbalance in our identified consciousness. A certain nature of stress in a specific period in our life resulted in imbalance in our consciousness. At the physical level, this is accepted as disease in a particular functioning of our body. In this way, our body becomes the limited perception of our consciousness; it acts as a mirror for all kinds of stressful identifications our consciousness has had with life. And a disease is a reminder to whether we are able to change our perception or identification and the degree to which we create our own reality.

Interestingly, the fundamental definition for medicine of the Siddha medicinal system has been revealed by Siddha Thirumoolar is as:

*“Refusing the disease of the body,
Refusing the disease of mind (psyche),
Refusing further as a prevention,
Refusing death itself ensures real medicine.”*

Siddha Thirumoolar's song sounds very simple but has a thundering definition. The first and best medicine is your perception, which emphasises a 'self-referral approach' as the healing attitude. To free our self from this prison can be made possible by widening our livingness to embrace actions that lead to

naturalness. Naturalness is the buzzword now. To be natural means to be sensitive to our spontaneity, to be immersed in the unending flux of life without any conceptual distortion. As integrated as I am that healthy my body and my living are!



TRIDOSHAM - THE THREE BIO-REGULATING FORCES

*“The embodied form has plasma, blood,
Flesh, fat, bone, bone marrow, generative fluid -
All the seven Thathus are formed.
They, mixed with Rasa, then begins
Entrance of Vatha, Pitta and Kapha.
By the past birth karmas, first Vatha rules,
Then Pitta rules 33 years, then the Slethumam,
For 37 years rules the body.*

*After the period of Slethumam,
If the body still lives a 100 years, then Chittam,
Buddhi, Ahamkara make the person
Experience the remaining Karmic happiness and sorrow.
After which, activity reduces; thinking falters;
And one succumbs to dejection...”*

*“...This body - elements five,
Senses five, Karmendriyas five,
Gnanendriyas five, Karanas four...”*

Pancha Ratnam, Verses 137 and 138, By woman Siddha Oorvasi

After understanding the vital need of the self-referral attitude mentioned in the last few pages we now move on into the inner dimensions of Siddha medicinal system.

Each individual is born with an inherent constitution that has a predominant influence of any one of the three Doshams. This remains constant for the entire lifetime of the individual. The Doshams are not visible nor are they abstract and can be sensed and felt.

The three Doshams are in constant motion and in an ever-shifting dynamic balance with one another and are required for life to happen. They are the bio-regulating principles... and are called:

Vatham,
Pittam, and
Kapham.

Health, in an individual, can be defined according to the harmonious and balanced functioning of these 3 Doshams.

In reference to the nature of Existence, for one moment let us discuss certain commonly used 'phrases'; phrases used in every language around the world, such as 'boiling with rage; I am all fired up; my blood is boiling; I am burning up'... etc. These are not just metaphors but more than metaphors for they not only hint at but also accurately describe an existential experience. All the ones above describe one thing in common - Heat! In other words, you are Fire!

Similarly, phrases such as 'I feel I am flying'; 'Time flew'; 'I took off...' they all say, 'I am Air!'

'A flood of relief'; 'drowning in misery'; 'swept away'; 'tears pouring down...', all say, 'I am Water!'

'My spirits are soaring'; 'heart feels open'; 'I feel larger than life...', are all descriptions of, 'I am Space or Ether!'

And descriptions of stability, firmness, consistency or phrases such as 'sticking to ones ground'; 'standing firm'; 'my feet are on the ground'; 'I feel the earth below me'; 'I am bound by my commitment', etc are all proclaiming the Earth element to be predominant - 'I am earth!'

In other words, we as humans are expressions of the five natural elements - Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth.

For an evolutionary understanding of each of the elements, we should know that each one is born from the previous one in a successive and progressive order. The evolutionary order of these elements, whether around us, or within our body looks like this: Space - Air - Fire - Water - Earth. From Space is born Air; from Air is born the element of Fire; from Fire is born Water, and from Water is born the Earth element.

The evolution of the five elements, which begins with Space, progresses only when a disturbance in the spaciousness of non-resistance gives birth to something new. This is how the Air element is born. When the mobility of Air gets confined or restricted, it generates heat, which is the birth of the third element, Fire. A decline in the intensity of heat results in coolness, which is the birth of the fourth, Water. And when coolness or water is further cooled, it gets further confined and cemented as the last element, Earth.

Each of them carries a distinctive quality, a specific eminence; a feature that distinguishes it from the rest. As evolution begins and proceeds and the second element is born from the first, the eminent quality of the first element is inherited by the second element and gets coupled with its own specific eminence. As evolution progresses and the next evoluent is born, it inherits the eminent qualities of the first as well as the second elements preceding it. This nature of

evolution carries down to the last of the five elements, which carries the four preceding qualities as well as its own.

Let us see each of their eminences:

Space or Ether expresses qualities of non-resistance, a yielding nature, a sense of soaring and feelings of expansion, openness and allowing.

The Air element expresses strong mobility, movement, coldness, roughness, subtlety, dryness, light and is fleeting in nature.

Fire expresses heat, is sharp, hot, emits light, has odour and is liquid in nature.

The Water element is flowing, relatively mobile but heavier than its preceding forefathers; fastening or sticky, smooth, it can be static or form globules and carries the property of coolness.

And the fifth element, Earth, articulates qualities of stability, form, hardness, binding, cementing, retaining, storing, holding, contouring, firmness, static and is granular in form.

The cosmos is a consequence of intermingling five natural elements and so is our human body. The Siddhas define the human body as the miniature replica, a micro cosmos of the macro. Their songs not only describe our body to be a combination of the five elements expressing their qualities but They even attribute all human functionality to be based on this too.

So, boiling with anger; a flood of relief; sticking firmly to your ground etc are all obvious descriptions of those particular elements expressing themselves through the human form.

But how do, these five tremendous forces of Nature function within the human form?

IN PAIRS!

The ancient Masters have said that the very principle that draws a man and a woman together, as a pair or couple in support of each other, is the one that combines the natural forces to also blend in appropriate ratios or idyllic combinations. In this manner, under the eye of the presiding cosmic intelligence are born three pairs in ratios that enhance their respective traits and eminent qualities facilitating optimal functionality, where one element behaves as the underlying support to augment its complimentary partner.

For instance, what better opportunity does activity have than a field of non-activity?

Or, sound can be best heard in the space of Silence and so on.

As per the verses of our Ancients, housed within the mansion (the human body) are these three pairs ever-functioning from conception to death as the imperatives of human existence. Just as each element expresses a distinct quality, they, in pairs, also animate combined and complimentary functions.

Let us introduce ourselves to our three perfectly paired inhabitants...

Vatham:

The Air element mingled with the element of Space is called Vatham; where space, by being an ideal field of non-resistance provides, the perfect occasion for the free movement of the Air element.

Together as Vatham, they assert characteristics like quick movement, mobility and a fleeting nature that tends to leave behind a kind of emptiness; a typical energy-spending attribute. Each of their proportions determines how active the force of Vatham is, as the amount of ether (or space) affects the ability of the air (wind) to gain momentum.

Vatham enables the expression of the other two Doshams (Pittam and Kapham). It governs bodily functions like breathing, blinking of eyelids, movements of muscles and tissues, pulsation of the heart, all motions of expansion and contraction and the movement of every single impulse in the nerve cells.

Psychologically, Vatham governs feelings and emotions of freshness, nervousness, fear, anxiety, pain, tremors and spasms. And its most important function is to carry the movements of body, mind and speech.

Pittam:

The union between the Fire element and the Water element is named as Pittam. The conjunction of the water element with Fire ensures the presence of something denser and cooler than fire itself, which naturally enhances its burning properties. Pittam is the bio-regulating force created by this dynamic interplay between the elements of water and fire. They do not change into each other, but modulate or control each other and are vital for life process to occur.

It characterises digestion, conversion, assimilation, absorption, nutrition, metabolism, body temperature, skin coloration and the lustre in the eyes etc - all of which belong to a quality that involves the working, manipulating and balancing of different energies using a discriminative faculty.

Psychologically, Pittam is responsible for anger, hatred, jealousy, intelligence, understanding and the ability to digest and assimilate life-events as well as inner experiences.

Kapham

The dynamic interplay between the elements of water and earth creates the bio-regulating force Kapham. The Union of this duo significantly increases the element of coolness, which overrides the influence of the fire element and generates properties like cementing, binding, formation and form, solidity etc.

The animated qualities of Kapham are stability, consistency, firmness, contouring, structuring, cohesion, lubrication and support - rarely leaving a feeling of emptiness. One can visualize Kapham as a stirring force that keeps water and earth from separating.

For example, if we take a pot half filled with water and add sand to it, the sand will gradually sink to the bottom of the pot. It separates from the water. The only way to keep the sand one with the water is to keep stirring the mixture continuously. This is the force of Kapham within our body.

Kapham cements the elements within the body and provides material for physical structure. This Dosham maintains bodily resistance, stamina, fortitude, strength, resilience and groundedness.

The element of Water is the predominant constituent of Kapham and this bodily water is physiologically responsible for biological strength, natural tissue stamina and resilience in the body. Kapham lubricates the joints, provides moisture to the skin, helps to heal wounds and fills the spaces in the body. It supports memory retention, gives energy to the heart and lungs and maintains immunity.

Psychologically, Kapham is responsible for emotions of attachment, greed and long-standing envy. It also expresses as the inclination towards calmness, firmness and love.

These are the three bio-regulating forces, Vatham, Pittam and Kapham or the Three Doshams that make up the substance of the human form and govern the physical, emotional and mental aspects of human functioning.

The cryptic verses of the accomplished Masters meticulously speak of the secret ways of Nature and reveal that none of the five elements is ever absent anywhere in the entire cosmos at anytime. All five coexist at all times by adopting different roles of catalyst, supporter, ground, base or acting field, or enhancer of the others etc in order to accentuate the most called for quality. Likewise, even in the human body none of the elements ever cease to exist.

But it is interesting to know that certain elements at certain times are found to exhibit alternative behaviour in which case they appear absent; but are ever-present in an obscure manner. In such cases they are not prominently noticed as they are not in full expression of their inherent characteristics but instead are providing their unique functionality as a 'behind the scenes' support for the frontier elements. So even though we categorise them into three pairs, each element is ever-present - either offstage or on.

Let us understand this by way of an interesting story...

At the time I was actively involved in the healing dimension of the Siddhas a young French man visited me. He was lean and very active. He was curious and interested in learning about Siddha healing practices. I asked a little about him. He said he was interested in Indian healing traditions and was learning Ayurveda from many different places in India since the past five years.

He expressed his wish to learn about Siddha healing. I said, 'keep on with touring all over India, visiting the different places teaching such Indian medical systems.' He asked why. I explained that at this time he couldn't learn one system in all its depth, living in one place. What

he needed right now was versatile learning of anything even if it be a single subject because learning a single subject in a single dimension would not induce his inspiration to learn enough.

He smiled. 'I understand, you mean I am a Vatha person'. 'Yes, maybe that is one reason', I replied.

Then, if I am Vatha, I cannot learn anything deeply enough and crystallise it? He asked, tampering away. I said, 'please don't consider your constitution only in one obsessive way. Can I ask you something? Even though you have gone many places in these five years what has been your one aim?'

'To learn Ayurveda', He retorted.

'So, your aim has been only one and you have a strong grounding in this purpose along with a solidity in your learning. All this says you have a Kapha nature. Now tell me, are you Vatha or Kapha?' I asked.

He raised his eyebrows!

Can you imagine Nature with only one dosham? Man is miniature Nature! It is the western attitude of both Indian and western scholars that always likes to see things in a tailor-made way. The post-modern influence believes: to learn about doshams is all that is needed to know about Ayurveda and

human beings. But Ayurveda means the science of Life. It is much more than doshams. Moreover, the doshams are dynamic and not static. So, even though the doshams are the vital keys in the Indian native healing systems they actually have a much wider application. And, even though everybody is governed by a predominant dosham defining his Prakrithi, the remaining two doshams are equally present in levels of hidden potential, in proportion to the dominant one, to take it to a more expressive level of life.

Just think about the different roles the doshams play in each ones life...

The dominant dosha - as the Prakrithi

The dosha of Vikrithi the dosha of the disease. (The nature of imbalance one acquires by deviating from his Prakrithi is Vikrithi.)

Life-stage dosha - The dosha governing that particular period of life.

Daily life-cycle dosham - The influencing dosha in the daily life cycle

The dosha of seasonal-cycle - dosha influencing that seasonal cycle.

The dosha of a particular disease can mutate from one to another when it turns into a chronic dosha/ disease.

We prefer shortcut formulae in order to acquire or attain something and by this, we feel our control over it. But, a living being is dynamic - impossible to capture into illusionary static theories.

Let us now see how the five elements of Nature, housed within our body express themselves in three pairs:

Vatha

Vatham or Vatha Dosha (the air element conjoined with the element of space) asserts properties of movement or propulsion and expresses through the human form as impulses or urges...such as thirst, hunger, sleep, sex, defecation, urination, sneezing, coughing, yawning, belching, tears or crying, heavy sighs etc; mostly, energy spending activities.

All Vatha based expressions are known as Vegams. Vegams are segregated into two parts. The Siddhas, in their texts caution us not to suppress or control them and always express them. The thirteen vegams mentioned above are the first of the two parts and are always to be expressed.

The vegams of the second category are more psychosomatic in nature and as per the sacred texts they are to be sublimated and not expressed or encouraged in anyway; all with caution as they are not be controlled or suppressed either. These are anger, envy, jealousy, evil impulses etc.

Pitta

From Vatham we now move to another pair, Pittam - the Fire and Water duo. According to its quality, the Fire element is found present wherever any nature of conversion is taking place. The most obvious of its expression in us is the heat within our body, hunger, vision or eyesight, tejas (complexion), valour, sharp intellect, digestion, assimilation of food and its conversion etc.

When Pitta, fire, participates in processes of digestion and conversion of food it takes on the name of 'Agni'. The Siddhas have declared the presence of thirteen such Agnis.

- The first five are the Panch Bhuta Agni's (the fiery aspect of each of the five elements) that act as conversion catalysts between each of them.
- Anna Agni, the sixth one, is responsible for digesting food.
- The next seven Agni's are the conversion catalysts in each of the seven Thathus, the seven tissues (Plasma, Blood, Flesh, Fat, Bone, Bone Marrow and Reproductive fluid) of the human body and are called the Sapt Thathu Agni's.

The role of the first of the seven Thathu agni's (Sapt Thathu Agni) begins only once the Anna Agni performs its function of digesting food. Once the food has been digested, the first of the Sapt Thathu Agni acts as the conversion catalyst and converts the digested food to form and nourish the Rasa Thathu, the first Thathu - commonly known as Plasma. Once this tissue has been satisfactorily formed and nourished, the next Agni takes over as the next in line conversion catalyst. It goes on to form and nourish the second of the seven Thathus, the Rakta Thathu the Blood in our body and so on.

Each subsequent and progressive stage of the formation and development of the seven tissues in our body (Plasma, Blood, flesh, Fat, Bone, Bone Marrow and reproductive fluid) has a specific Agni working behind it.

Kapha

The properties shown by the third pair (earth united with water), Kapham, are cementing, binding, formations, stabilising etc. We see it

in our body as lubrication, fastening of joints, tolerance, stability, firmness etc.

Each of these pairs is responsible for common human functions and collectively forms the basic platform of human existence. Which is how we come to question - what defines a Vatha based constitution, or a Pitta based constitution or a Kapha based one?

With every human body housing all five elements another ongoing phenomenon is of an intermingling influence; the influence of each element on each of the others.

Each basic acting influence of each pair experiences the influence of each of the others, which gives birth to the ongoing phenomena of intermingling influences.

Vatham	Movement and propulsion
Pittam	Heat and conversion
Kapham	Form and stability

This intermingling influence affects each expression and basic to complex function. Let us better understand through an example how the quality, nature and expression of basic functions undergo such changes...

Example 1 :

A basic Pitta based function Digestion - An essential physiological process.

Influence of Pitta

Digestion governed by a Fire or Pitta influence with its own kind of nature, will evidently perform its best as its function only gets more enhanced.

Influence of Vatha

The process of digestion, under a governing influence of Vatha dosham absorbs and imbibes its typical qualities into its expression. In other words, digestion takes place but with an irregular or frequently changing manner and quality - sometimes good and sometimes poor.

Influence of Kapha

The force of Kapham can also be described as decline in heat, resulting in a solidifying effect. Therefore, the digestion process under a governing influence of Kapha dosham is mostly weak in nature as its fiery characteristic somewhat declines under the cooling influence.

Example 2:

A basic Vatha based function: Physical activity.

Influence of Vatha

All functions of physical activity under its own governing influence become faster and more active.

Influence of Kapha

The nature of Kapha is opposite to Vatha as Vatha expresses qualities that are airy and light whereas Kapha expresses as solidity and heaviness. This combined influence lessens and slows down all activity, making it lethargic.

Influence of Pitta

Pitta has a minimal influence of the earth element in it but carries a predominant water and fire influence, which makes physical activity moderate in comparison to the high and airy nature of Vatha and the solid and slow nature of Kapha.

All of our human functions come under the influence of one, two or three of the pairs and their combined expression defines our Prakrithi - our inherent constitution. The literal meaning of the word Prakrithi is Pra, which means 'first' or 'natural' and Kirithi, which means 'born' or 'form' 'the first born nature or form'.

After birth and until death, our Prakrithi doesn't ever change. But, the influence of incompatible climates, long-term habits, lifestyle, food, and so on do make apparent alterations. This is named as Vikrithi.

Our Prakrithi is formed mainly by a combination of our parents Prakirithi. In other words, the genetic patterns of the two partners; the state of their bodies; the state of their mind, lifestyle conditioning etc, during union and conception are the factors responsible for deciding the constitution of the unborn child.



PRAKRITHI

What Is Prakrithi?

As said by the Siddhas, our human body is built and runs and expresses based on the three-bio regulating forces, Vatham, Pittam and Kapham; the three natural inhabitants of our body. Our actions and mobility depends upon Vatham; Pittam governs our processes, functions and conversions; and the force of Kapham builds the structure and substance of our human body. Collectively, they illustrate the constitution of the individual, which is known as Prakrithi. The Prakrithi of the individual can also be described as the resultant set pattern emerging from the three combining pairs. This pattern or imprint confers the governing quality to the individual. The imprinting of the constitution prevails for ones entire lifetime and cannot be changed or altered and any apparent change is attributed to a shift from ones inherent Prakrithi. In other words if this shift or deviation dissolves, the individual at once falls back into his inherent patterns, his Prakrithi.

We have already read instances of Vatha based activities: walking, running, belching, hunger, sex, sleep etc. The Vatha duo, mainly Air supported by the space element, are responsible for mobility or propulsion; primarily, the energy-spending actions in the body. This confirms the presence of these two natural elements within our human form.

To survive each and every individual has to eat and digest the food. And another common faculty to mankind is eyesight. These kinds of bodily functions confirm the existence of the Pittam couple within our human form; the Fire and water element.

Lastly, we can attribute all kinds of formation, binding, consolidating or stabilising within the human form to the Kapham pair, Earth with Water.

All of this confirms the co-existence as well as governance of all the five elements within our human body. In which case all people on this entire planet should look the same, walk the same; there should be no difference in height, skin colour, hair, habits, behaviour, characters etc. But this is not so. No two human beings are alike. Each one is an individual unique to him self and this uniqueness is defined by a typicality distinctive to him alone. How? One or two of the three pairs assert a stronger influence over the others. This governing influence is Prakrithi. Ones Prakrithi is always acting, influencing; painting its unique shade on each pair and its expression. This is to say that our Prakrithi colours each and every function, activity or its aspect, giving it its unique shade or flavour.

So, although each of us walks, each ones walk remains typical to him based on his Prakrithi.

This brings us to two questions:

How many different types of Prakrithi are there?

And, which are the most prominent expressions or factors deciding the predominance of the constitution type.

The ancient Siddhas have made known 10 types of Prakrithi:

1. Vatha
2. Pitta
3. Kapha
4. Vatha-Pitta
5. Vatha-Kapha
6. Pitta-Vatha
7. Pitta-Kapha
8. Kapha-Vatha
9. Kapha-Pitta
10. Vatha-Pitta-Kapha type is a very rare constitution.

Let us now take a look at each type and its prominent expressions that shows its dominance over ones mentality, behaviour and body.

As already mentioned the intrinsic characteristics of the Vatha Dosham are irregularity, coldness, dryness, mobility, movement etc. To put it simply: all functions or activities whether they are Pitta based, Kapha based or even Vatha based, under the mainstream influence of Vatham show and express with a strong undeniable Vatha quality or colour.

For instance, let us take the activity of walking.

By itself, walking is a Vatha based activity. Under a mainstream Vatham influence the individual's walk will show strong Vatha qualities making his walk quick, light, often irregular, ever changing, speedy etc - a bundle of extremities.

In case of a wide held Pittam influence, the Vatha based activity of walking shows characteristics of Pitta nature, such as moderation, purposeful, balanced etc.

And in the instance of a major Kapham influence, the Vatha based activity of walking shows Kapha qualities of being slow, steady, heavy, consistent etc.

The intermingling quality of our three dosham creates the typicality of the individual.



Prakrithi Types

Recognising the Predominant Dosham of One's Inborn Constitution

Evaluating your own individual constitution type:

Vatha - V

Pitta - P

Kapha - K

To determine your own individual constitution evaluate yourself as accurately and honestly as you can. Do avoid the temptation to see yourself as you would like to rather than as you are. If during your evaluation you feel you partly belong to one constitution and partly to another please write both.

Body Frame

V people tend to be either unusually short or unusually tall, with a rather slender and lanky body frame. Their bone structures are either light or rather heavy and often protrude forming prominent joints.

P people have medium or average body frames and are proportionate in height and weight, which indicates the prudent use of energy for development.

K people are built with a heavy or broad body frame with a heavy bone structure, clearly indicative of their tendency to store energy. Their feet and toes are noticeably short and squarish.

Weight

V people rarely gain weight due to a high degree of energy spending and the dryness of their constitution promotes a dominant leanness of body. In case for some reason they do put on weight, they lose it equally quickly and easily. They could experience frequent fluctuations in weight too.

P people gain or lose weight relatively easily and are able to maintain their weight with only minor fluctuations.

K people have a natural tendency of gaining a lot of weight based on the inherent trait of energy conservation and reluctance towards energy spending. Therefore, they may gain weight all too easily but face great difficulty in losing it.

Walk

V people have a very quick gait with swift movements, always in a hurry.

P people have a moderate and normal pace of walking. Their walk is far from aimless and displays intent.

K people walk in a slow and steady gait, in a rather relaxed way.

Associated movements of body while walking

V people while walking show a lot of body movement e.g. shoulders etc.

P people walk in a normal fashion with their body displaying compact alignment.

K people show no associated movements in their walk.

Teeth

V people are known for their crooked and uneven teeth. Their innate irregularity may also show in their jaw, making it either too small to fit all the teeth or too big and protruding. Sometimes some teeth may be significantly larger than the other ones.

P people have a set of medium and average sized teeth that fit well in a moderate and proportionately formed jaw, but their teeth are prone to cavities.

K people have a large and gleaming set of teeth, which rarely need attention.

Digestive power

V people have an irregular appetite, and their digestive power is never quite steady or consistent.

P people have a very powerful digestive system a rather strong stomach.

K people have a weak and fragile digestive system and frequently suffer from digestive disorders.

Ability to bear hunger

V people have an innate ability to bear fluctuating hunger intervals.

P people show a poor ability in bearing hunger and depend on their intake of food largely.

K people have a high degree of ability to bear hunger and can go for long periods without proper food.

Thirst

V people show an irregular nature of thirst.

P people are often thirsty.

K people are seldom thirsty.

Quantity of food

V people have an irregular and inconsistent appetite and consume varying quantities.

P people are inclined to have a large appetite and consume large quantities of food at meal times.

K people display normal appetite and consume normal quantities of food.

Groups of desired tastes

V People are inclined towards foods of sweet, salty and sour flavours and nature.

P people are inclined towards food that is sweet, bitter and astringent in taste.

K people prefer pungent, astringent and bitter tasting foods.

Foods desired

V people like warm food.

P people like cold food.

K people like warm and dry food.

Bowel movements

V people have irregular bowel movements and often suffer constipation.

P people are rarely constipated and enjoy regular and frequent bowel movements.

K people have regular well-formed stools but they may be slow in their elimination.

Perspiration

V people seldom perspire implying typical cold bodies and dry constitution.

P people perspire heavily and easily because of their ever-fiery constitution but may suffer from foul body odour due to excess sweating.

K people with their wet constitution perspire normally in any climate.

Sleep

V people are light sleepers and often suffer interrupted and little sleep indicative of the erratic trait of their dosham but sometimes due to severe exhaustion they could fall into a deep slumber and are impossible to rouse. Often even after a long sleep they could wake up in the morning without a feeling of rest as their minds continue to spend energy even in their sleep.

P people enjoy normal sleep patterns, fall asleep easily and wake up alert.

K people display unusually deep and excessive sleep patterns as they innately enjoy saving energy.

Dreams

V people mostly dream of flying, jumping, climbing hills, etc.

P people's dreams are mostly of violence, fights and struggles

K people most of the time dream of water bodies, clouds and romance

Personality Traits

V people innately resist any sort of regularity and thereby respond quickly to changes in environment. They are extremely changeable and sensitive, often high strung and restless as their mind demands continual stimulation. Although they are high in their energy levels, they burn out quickly.

P people are strong and forceful in their dealings; dedicated to the practical side of life. When possible they turn domineering. They are inherently courageous and strongly believe in fair play.

K people enjoy the peace and pleasure of home and family. They are serious, steady and calm individuals with virtues of patience, fortitude and humility, which in excess could turn into passiveness, attachment, possessiveness and greed. They are naturally compassionate in nature and their strong maternal instincts arise from the predominant influence of the Earth element in them.

Speech and Voice Qualities

V people talk very fast, often skipping or missing words in their sentences and speak in a rising voice. They often tend to stray from the subject. They are highly talkative and can speak on almost any subject for hours, as talking involves spending a lot of energy. V people show an innate inability of keeping anything solid within them. In other words they gain satisfaction only after expulsion.

P people talk in a sharp, provocative and clear-cut manner, typical of their fiery constitution. They are concise and always know what they want to communicate, what response they desire and what nature of energy needs to be projected to obtain it. Their tone is usually intense and often carries a note of impatience. P people are often accused of having sharp tongues.

K people talk slowly, cautiously without volunteering much. Their voice is pleasant, clear and resonant, much lower in pitch than V or P people. They strike up a conversation only if they have something important to say and when they do, it is a pleasure to listen to them.

Energy spending

V people have a tendency to overwork due to the stirring nature of the air principle within them.

P people show moderate energy levels indicative of their natural inclination for balance.

K people exude a flow of steady energy.

Performance of activities

V people carry out their activities with high initiative and rather quickly. They are fast and nimble in their work.

P people maintain a moderate pace in performing their activities and express a medium initiative.

K people work very slowly and consistently. Their pace is calm and gradual, undisturbed by anything.

Excitability

V people get excited quickly and easily but lose interest equally speedily implying the natural tendency of spending high amounts of energy.

P people get excited, react extremely quickly, and have the tendency to remain confined to that mode for rather long.

K people tend to respond to excitement rather slowly, showing no signs of feeling the impact of anything too suddenly. They take their time, which brings forth a rather calm response indicating their reluctance in spending energy easily.

Grasping power

V people are equipped with a naturally fast grasping power.

P people have a quick grasping power.

K people are slow in picking up or grasping anything new.

Memory

V people have a very short memory so although they remember easily they tend to forget equally easily. They may burst out in a sudden spurge of anger but it is gone and forgotten equally soon.

P people show a medium or average memory span. They remember easily but find it hard to forget. They may simmer a long time in the feeling of anger or resentment even after the matter is long past.

K people have an unusually long memory and don't forget anything easily, although they need to be told something more than once before it completely sinks in. Their natural ability to store encourages the memory to retain every detail for a long time.

Nature of moods

- V people show traits of impulsiveness and erratic behaviour.
- P people are highly forceful and assertive by nature.
- K people are far more relaxed and reliable but on the other hand show traces of eccentric behaviour.

Attitude to problems or difficulties their characteristic emotions

- V people in difficult situations show anxiety and severe worry or display signs of instability or inconsistency mainly because they are unable to digest and assimilate the oncoming situation. But when they do cope, they carry out activities quite creatively and face situations with enthusiasm.
- P people deal with most problems with reactions of anger or get provoked to levels of high irritability if they feel overwhelmed by a situation. But when they are able to handle it they become pensive and remain with a deep pondering attitude.
- K people are peaceful, slow and steady when faced by problems and difficulties as they innately avoid confrontations. They display a calming steadfastness in dealings, but this could assume forms of passiveness or inactivity at times.

On counting the number of V, P and K's you will find that one or two are in majority. This determines your Prakrithi. For e.g. If the number of V's are 9, P's are 13 and K's are 3 then your constitution is likely to be Pitta dominant with Vatha as the secondary influence.

QUALITIES EXPRESSED BY THE THREE DOSHAMS WHEN IN BALANCE AND IMBALANCE

VATHAM		PITTAM		KAPHAM	
Balance	Imbalance	Balance	Imbalance	Balance	Imbalance
Active	Anxious	Decisive	Confused	Steady	Sluggish
Creative	Dull	Ambitious	Envious	Loving	Possessive
Secure	Insecure	Knowledgeable	Complaining	Peaceful	Insensitive
Inspired	Depressed	Understanding in depth	Irritable	Caring	Attached
Flexible	Unstable	Clarity	Anger	Consistent	Stubborn/ rigid



Ayurveda enlists seven different types of Prakrithi (inherent constitutions) but the Siddha system declares them to be ten in number.

A child could be born with a constitution having the predominance of any one, two or three of the Tridoshams, i.e. it could be born with Vatham, Pittam or Kapham as the most dominate quality of his/her constitution or a child could also be born with either equal or unequal combinations of Vatha, Pitta or Kapha Doshams. Combinations such as these make for classified constitutions.

Described below are the characteristics of the various Prakrithi permutations. The combinations described are of one predominant Dosham and the hidden acting influence of a second Dosham.

Vatha-Pitta Individual:

Here the predominant dosham is Vatham and the secondary influence is Pittam. The characteristics of such an individual are of both Vatha and Pitta. Dark complexion, a skin that is both dry and sensitive, wavy hair, weak health and the individual is liable to be shaken up easily. Such individuals desire to be truthful yet lean on falsehood, are abnormally prone to fearful anger. They desire frequent sexual indulgences, are highly indecisive in nature and crave sweet and tangy food types.

Since air has the ability to fan the fire, the personality of such an individual can get more irritated and impulsive because of this trait as fire already has an upward nature and the participating air blazes it further upwards.

These people are often seen to suffer diseases related to acid eructation, constipation, headaches and eye disorders.

Vatha-Kapha Individual:

'Coolness' is a trait inherent to both Vatha and Kapha doshams. If this combination is in balance, the individual is of composed personality, but if the Vatha-Kapha combination suffers imbalance the personality shows signs of highly astringent nature.

The individual has a flabby constitution, is slow in movement and has a rosy complexion with a skin type that is generally dry with some oily zones.

The person is inclined to yogic practices and prefers pungent and sour food. A common characteristic I found in Vatha-Kapha personalities is their rigid adherence to obsessive disciplines. Many are time-obsessive and fixated in trying to follow routines to a level of routine-sickness (a personality of heavy external-reference) and therefore more than often fail to digest the result of their discipline. Since the Kapha force expresses qualities of rigidity belonging to the earth element, the 'cool' nature of the air element further increases it and makes it further rigid resulting in diseases related to the stiffness of joints, frozen shoulders, rheumatism, weak digestion and other circulatory disorders.

Pitta-Vatha Individual:

People of this constitution have physical characteristic of fair complexion, intelligence, a pleasant voice, they are appreciative of sweet aromas and are inclined towards initiating research in new areas. They have a typical short cough; have dry skin and desire sweet and sour food types.

The Fire element with its ability to expand the airy nature of the personality generates more creativity when in idyllic balance. But, in cases otherwise it makes the individual more workaholic in nature. The physical ailments the person often suffers are gastritis and chronic fatigue syndromes.

Pitta-Kapha Individual:

People of this constitution have a skin complexion akin to the colour of the Champaka flower; they have a pleasant voice, enjoy the company of the learned and are inclined towards the mysteries of meditation. They are abundantly charitable in nature and express kindness towards the whole of creation. They often show cravings for spicy and bitter foods. The psychological aspect of the Pitta qualities of dominance or arrogance and the Kapha traits of solidity increase the eccentric nature of the personality.

Speaking from the point of history many kings or ruling personalities have been of Kapha constitution or its derivatives such as Kapha-Vatha and Kapha-Pitta. The great fighters and a majority of ancient day soldiers who supported their rulers have been of a Pitta constitution especially of a Pitta-Kapha constitution. People popular for sacrificing or losing their life in the battlefield or ones dedicated towards charity or in fields of research etc have often been Pitta-Kapha constitutions.

Kapha-Pitta Individual:

Kapha-pitta individuals are of rosy complexion, tinged slightly green, often with red hair. People of this dosham type have oily and sensitive skin, have brilliant speech abilities, speak in a clear tone of voice and are capable of attracting and kindling sexual desires. They are mostly inclined towards the path of wisdom; stand steadfast in the path of Truth and desire for sweet and spicy foods.

Their Pitta nature of sharp intelligence gets deeply channelised under the influence of the solidifying Kapha nature. In the olden days, the philosophers who were killed after they declared their insights, which happened to be contrary to conventional beliefs, seem to be of this type.

If this constitution falls into imbalance the individual acquires metabolic disorders, skin diseases such as urticaria etc.

Kapha-Vatha Individual:

Kapha-Vatha individuals are people of robust body, dark or rosy complexion and have an excessive sexual appetite. They have intentions of gaining power,

have a yearning for occultism and nurture an eager desire for research. They hold a special reverence for elders and a love for the learned. They have the natural ability to take the leading initiative and forward action. They mostly desire for sour and pungent food types.

Once again, the cooling nature of both Kapha and Vatha in this type of constitution ends up creating circulatory problems. As for the positive aspect, the grounding nature of the Kapha force mixed with the creative traits of Vatha, generate 'leading personalities', rulers of a Nation or corporate sectors and/or in areas of new invention of gadgets and mechanisms.

The true purpose behind understanding ones own Prakrithi is because it helps recognise ones natural and intrinsic or ones pre-established resonance with Nature. With this inner perspective, one can refrain from deterring away from one's intrinsic nature.



NATURE LIMITS YOU!

Does Nature limit you by confining you to a specific and unchangeable body-mind type?

A Vatha dominant person's body is naturally cold in nature as the Fire element lacks dominance in his constitution. When this person is exposed to a cold climate, the already predominant Vatha qualities get further enhanced and increase under the influence of the external climate. This increase can lead to disorders and imbalances that hamper his lifestyle. For this person to remain in balance in circumstances of a cold climate, his Vatha nature needs to be kept in balance by protecting his body against the cold and keeping it sufficiently warm to deter the Vatha dosham from increasing. This is his limitation! Contrarily, Pitta people have to take enough care in summer and keep their body cool as it is already predominantly governed by Fire.

Likewise, each dominant type implies a certain confinement or a set imprint and parameter, which the individual has to live by in this lifetime.

A Pitta dominant, a naturally fiery constitution easily enjoys cooler climates and faces difficulty in extreme heat conditions; whereas a Kapha person prefers moderate cold and doesn't really mind the heat.

But though I describe Prakrithi as a 'limitation', if you observe carefully at no point does 'Prakrithi' ever turn incompatible with Nature! Therefore, I would better describe Prakrithi as Nature's gift of various possibilities according to which we can flourish in our own ways of appropriate living. What we see when we look through our eyes at the world, most of us assume this perception

to be who we are. But, such a materialistic view is all about living only on the surface of existence, a shallow outlook to life.

If and when we live according to the choices provided to us by Nature then these very choices, arising from our own constitution, provide us a great advantage and unfold extraordinary options, should we need them for personal healing.

Prakrithi is that perfect design; that idyllic blending that ensures a paved pathway and platform over which the necessary lifestyle and life-mission can be enacted to its completion. Ultimately, everything we learn about our deeper selves enhances not only our health but also the quality of our physical life.

Understanding Prakrithi is learning the skill of true self-expression. And even though each one of us can reach within for support to learn of it, it is often difficult to get a hang of. Fuelled by our own individual Prakrithi we finally understand our personal choices and what it means to protect ourselves from influences not in support of our growth. We begin to understand the care we need to give to our inner constitution as well as the love it provides us with. Recognizing our Prakrithi gradually leads us to comprehend the pointed meanings and lessons expressed by our illness, which generates a sustaining hope and empowerment from within to 'refuse the disease' from our body-mind.

So far, we have spoken of each Prakrithi type and both its variants - in balance and/or in imbalance, known as Vikrithi. Either way it expresses its distinctive nature. We will see in detail now, the causative factors for this.

The harmonious balance of the doshams affects the mental and emotional states of an individual positively and constructively; whereas their imbalance manifests as negative characteristics, traits and attitudes.



CAUSES OF DERANGEMENT OF THE THREE BIO-REGULATING FORCES

Vatham (air dominant principle):

Excessive activities or habits such as the ones mentioned below can aggravate the Vatha Dosham.

- Excessive manual labour
- Excessive sexual indulgences
- Excessive studying
- Speaking in a very high-pitched voice
- Excessive mental exercise

- High-level fear and/or anxiety
- Swimming against the current
- Excessive fasting
- Suppressing calls of nature, e.g. urinating, defecating, passing of wind (farting) etc.
- Excessive intake of bitter, pungent, astringent or dry food substances, and/or a continuous use of particular kinds of pulses and rice.
- Over-exposure to cloudy and stormy days in the early morning and in the evening.

The following symptoms show the reduction of Vatha activity in one's physical and psychological structure:

- A shifting pain all over the body
- Fits of depression
- Less receptivity
- Difficulty in putting words together fluently
- Slowing down of all bodily activities
- Lack of creative nature
- Difficulty in adapting to new situations

Pittam (Fire-dominant principle):

Excessive activities or habits mentioned below can aggravate the Pitta Dosham.

- Grief
- Anger
- Arguments
- Physical exercises at mid-day or in very hot weather
- Unnatural sexual intercourse
- Intake of food at irregular times
- An excessive intake of bitter, sour, salty, or spicy food
- Excessive exposure to the sun during the summer, autumn seasons
- Aggravation can also occur at noon and midnight since both times are ruled by Pitta nature.

The reduction of Pittam activity in the body shows symptoms of:

- Poor appetite
- Inability to concentrate
- Inability of logical understanding

- Difficulty in gaining orientation
- Difficulty in programming and planning.

Kapham or slethumam: (water-dominant principle)

Excessive activities or habits mentioned below can aggravate the Kapha Dosham.

- Sedentary habits
- Laziness
- Sleeping in the daytime
- Living in the same kind of situation for a long time
- Excessive intake of sweet, salty, oily and cold food
- Excessive intake of food
- Over-exposure to the chills of winter or spring in the forenoon and the evening
- Unwillingness to start any new venture in life

A reduction of Kapham activity in the body shows symptoms of:

- Thirst
- General debility
- Insomnia
- Sinking feeling
- Impulsive psyche
- Irritation while dealing with situations
- Poor grounding nature in oneself and in life

The immortal Siddha Masters describe 'health' as the harmonious equilibrium in the three main functionalities of the human body:

The balanced functioning of the three doshams within our body.

The function of the seven Thathus or tissues that constitute the formation of the body; and the resultants of their function.

The balanced functioning of the elimination system: the Malas

Arogyam or health can also be defined as 'Sama Dosham', a state in which the three doshams of our body co-exist in optimal equilibrium. In other words the state of Sama Dosham or perfect health comes from maintaining this harmony along with an immunity to overcome the various changing

influences. Consequently, it implies ill health to be a disturbance of this equilibrium.

The three doshams and the seven Thathus are compositions of the five natural elements Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth, which is why we can conclude the

basic elemental compositions to have encountered disturbance that disables their required functions and alters their qualities. A disturbance can either be an exaggeration or a decline in the element or its complimentary half. For instance, we know Vatham is a combination of Air and Space in a ratio required to support human functions. When their ratio is hampered and either or both elements alter so do their qualities and performance. Similarly, if the Pitta dosham (Fire with Water) is over-exposed to the Air element, it dries up the cooling aspect and hence aggravates the Fire.



THE FLUX OF DOSHAMS

Several internal as well as external factors continually influence the state of the doshams within the human body. One of them is seasonal change. The three doshams increase or decrease from their natural state of equilibrium according to changes in season; the atmosphere created by these shifts is what could be conducive to inviting disease in the body and mind. Therefore, it is essential to check such deviations. Deviations such as these instantly alter the normal activity of the Dosham, which gets reflected as changes we perceive in our body and other behavioural patterns. This is why the ancient Siddhas recommend our behavioural patterns and life-style routines to be altered and adopted to each changing season.

Over and above the influence of seasons, the three doshams undergo change even in the course of a single day and are influenced by a different set of factors such as our intake of food, day to day situations, encounters and events etc. Therefore both, our daily intake of food etc as well as the ever-changing atmosphere and climate in the course of a single day play a vital role. For instance, even though the sun shines during the entire day it is most hot in the afternoon. During the night, the moon is active and the entire atmosphere cools down. In other words, the force of Kapha increases during the hours of early night and early morning and during midday and midnight the force of Pittam increases. In the late evening and late night hours the force of Vatham increases. Such changes influence both our body and mind.

Similarly, a shift in the equilibrium can also be expected whenever an individual moves or travels from one place to another or from one climate to another. Such changes in the state of the doshams carry an effect on our health both physically and mentally.

There is one more acting participant similar to the daily and seasonal changing rhythms - the stages or phases each individual passes through in his lifetime. According to the Siddhas, three stages in human life are governed by each of the three doshams in a predominant manner.

VATHAM	Early years to adolescence.
PITTAM	Early adulthood to beginning of old age
KAPHAM	Old age, unto death

The Vatha dosham is predominant in the early years of an individual's life as this is the stage of growth, activity (kids are very active and playful) and rapid changes in physical appearance. In this stage, the individual has a flexible and receptive mind.

Gradually, the Pitta dosham takes over and applies its typical characteristics of striving, surging ambition, goal-oriented-ness and intentions of planning and establishing oneself in a chosen life career etc. This characterises one's years as an adult.

As the individual moves on and matures in age, his perception of life also undergoes change and refinement over time. This gives rise to concerns and cares about one's successors or children. Slowly one tends to drop his competitive nature and is more willing to accept whatever has already been acquired and accomplished in the earlier years and is seen to live with a feeling of contentment. In this age, the Kapha Dosham has taken over as the predominant bio-regulating force governing one's body-mind and experience.

Based on a difference in perspective from the Siddha Tradition, the science of Ayurveda declares the order of the ruling bio-regulating forces in relation to ones years in life given below:

KAPHAM	Early years to adolescence.
PITTAM	Early adulthood to beginning of old age
VATHAM	Old age, unto death



As all of the five elements are intrinsically interlinked the constant exchange keeps them ever changing. If an individual understands the working nature of his own constitution, he is in a better position to manage to keep the natural equilibrium and enjoy good health.

The appearance of any symptom of ill health is the first sign of the individual having lost some nature of sensitivity and balance in relation to the nature of his constitution. If the lifestyle of a Vatha predominant person demands him to reside in a severely cold climate, which is not naturally compatible to his body type, it is his own sensitivity that guides him to adopt and imbibe all necessary elements from his naturally available resources to keep his Vatha constitution in balance. He could either protect his body with sufficiently warm clothes or keep his body warm by being close to a fire etc. In other words, he is imbibing the fire element in order to overcome the exaggerated Vatha circumstances. But if he remains insensitive or ignorant of his so-called limitation,

it would only lead to ill health or sickness. This instance illustrates how the quality of an element can be imbibed and used to keep the others in balance.

The livingness of the Siddhas exemplify the sensitivity with which they lived and their encounters with imbalance and derangement in the course of their life base directed them into searching the imperatives leading to such dysfunctions. To this they express as below:

Food

Lifestyle

Planetary influences

Evil Spirits

Karmic diseases

The above are the imperatives that either enhance human existence or turn into doorways of adversities! I believe we can ascribe these possibilities to our very own ignorance and insensitivity. In other words, if life is led on the steps of self-referral then the diversions of ignorance and its consequent imbalances need not make their appearance in the journey of life.

Let us view each possibility:

Food includes our daily diet, our long-term eating habits, timings, quantities, combinations etc.

Lifestyle speaks of daily routine, activities, habits, sleep patterns, nature of work, behaviours, attitudes etc.

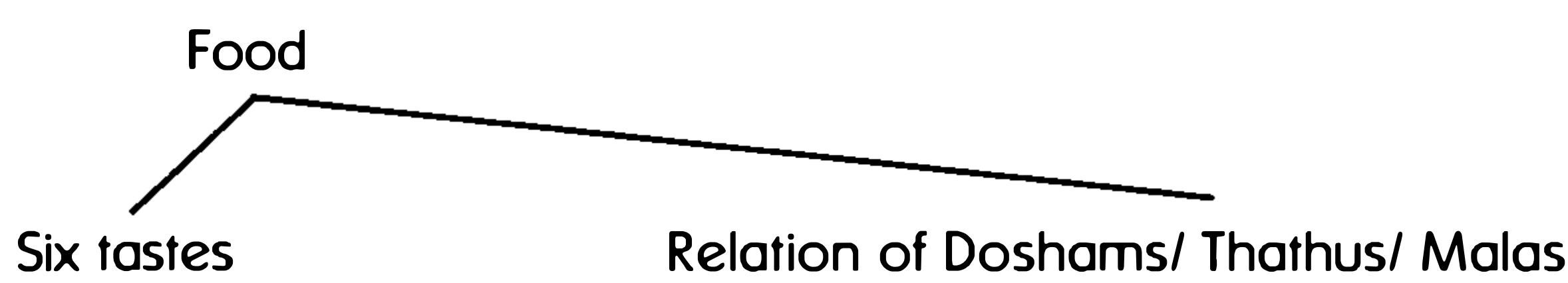
Planetary influences include the prevailing influence of planets and their effect on an individual in all aspects. Diseases that do not respond to medicines or treatment are often associated with negative planetary influences. There are several methods to bring planetary influences into balance and harmony. A native Siddha healer always considers the planet that has the power to cause disease; the kinds of disease that are likely to occur, in which parts of the body and when. As the health and longevity of an individual are of primary concern they are often the first things examined in the natal chart.

The dimension of evil spirits discusses and describes cases of possessions and disorders of personality changes etc that do not respond to conventional treatments and medicine etc.

Karmic Diseases are acquired by one's past deeds.

Obviously, Food and Lifestyle are the only two imperatives well within our reach to work with. They can be changed, altered, modified, enhanced, pacified, reduced etc. according to our will whereas the rest is beyond ordinary reach.

The Siddhas have disclosed in great detail the nature of food. They speak of six tastes - sweet, sour, pungent, bitter, astringent and salty and their respective properties and qualities. Food being a manifestation of various elemental compositions also lays an impact on the balance of the three main health-governing factors of the human body: the three doshamas, the Thathus and their resultants and the Mala functioning. The Siddhas call this nature of impact necessary as well as inevitable for human existence. We hereby understand the vital importance of being aware of the food we eat, its qualitative nature and the impact it carries on the elements within us.



In their verses, the Siddhas illustrate in great depth the ways of life and lifestyle and its sway on the equilibrium of the three factors. Our day-to-day routine and activities are actually based on and executed by the three doshamas. Over-exertion, exhaustion, lethargy, chronic habits, character traits, attitudes, life experiences and nature of work that demands excessive utilisation of any sort or even deprivation of emotional nourishment etc. all play a vital role in determining the state of our health.

This is not all. Another overseen influence are the Exogenous elements - the Doshams around us, that express as time, seasonal changes etc and are inter connected and intermingling with all endogenous functioning. Each of us passes through changing doshamas and experiencing its varying moods and qualities through the course of each single day.

In this way endogenous and the exogenous influences, collectively affect the equilibrium of the doshamas, the Thathus functions and its resultants and the Mala functions.

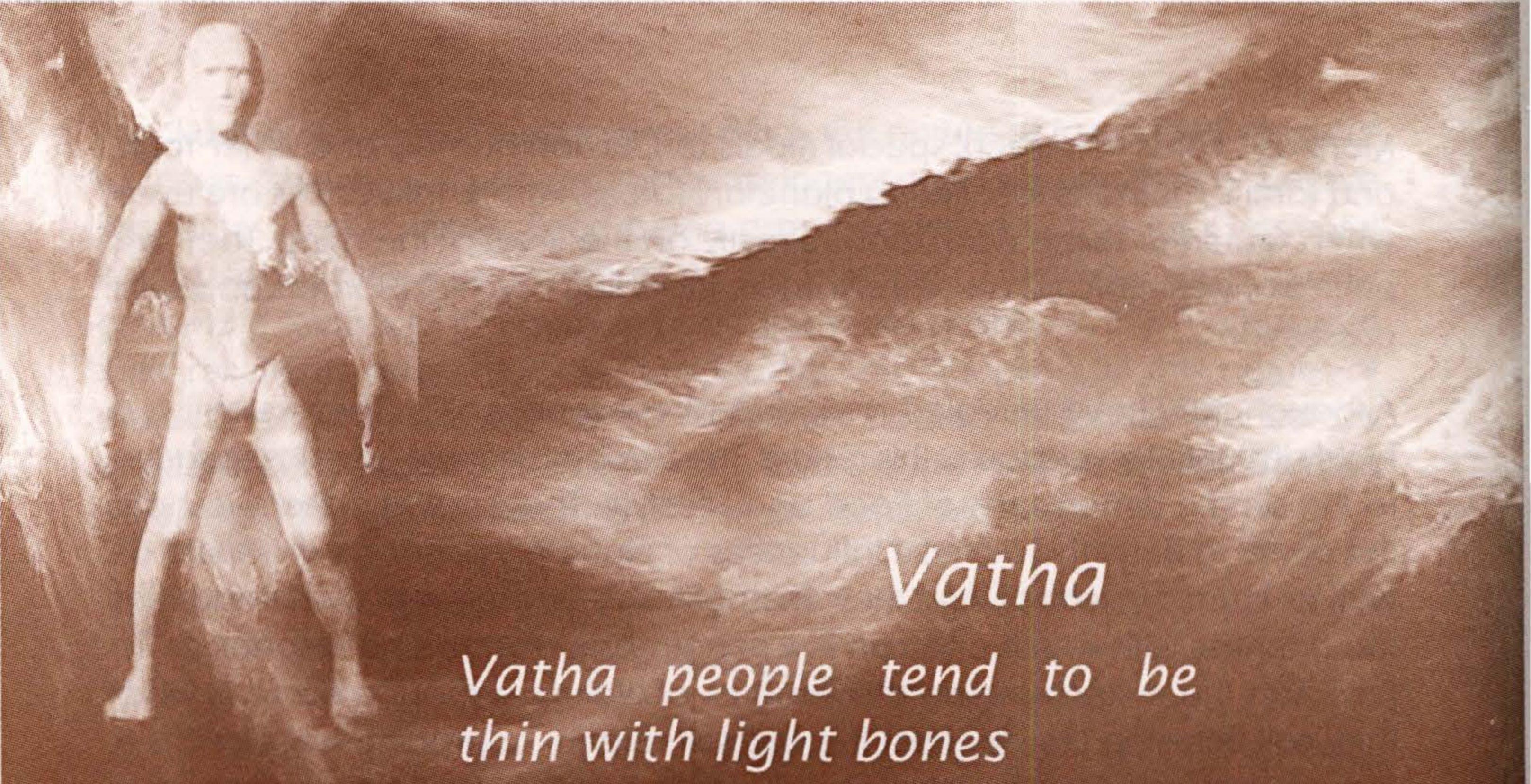
This is the primary reason why all ancient medicinal preparations are administered in relation with all these imperatives: food, lifestyle climate, season, etc. to help bring back any lost balance. In the ancient approach to all nature of ill health, dietary habits and routine and seasonal changes in lifestyle are thoroughly examined and evaluated to unearth any causative factors.

After pursuing the above nature of treatment in instances where symptoms or suffering still persist, the Divine healers suggest alternative approaches to uncover the cause. These alternative approaches are related to the remaining imperatives: Planetary influence, Evil Spirits, and Karmic Disease. The Siddhas have disclosed exactly how these factors can interfere with the inherent balance of the body and any healing in these areas calls for an entirely different approach for which they the have revealed various remedial measures and treatments.

Mantras (words of power), special rituals (pujas and homas) and other Yogic and Tantric methods for altering planetary forces, karmic influences are used when required. These work more directly on the level of the mind. They are particularly effective for mental disorders, including psychic disorders and spirit possessions.

Although they have revealed remedies of every possibility, They establish a highly insightful revelation in this regard. The Siddhas attribute great importance to the simple dimensions of Food and Lifestyle. They describe them to hold the secret to deter the adverse influences of planetary positions, evil spirits as well as karmic diseases. And they exemplify this by their very own livingness the oneness with which one can live in harmony, rhythm and resonance. To flow with the ever-changing movements of Nature without a battle is what they call 'refusing the disease'. It is the self-referral approach that exhibits a natural and sensitive manoeuvrability that has the strength to carry one through the Variables of Nature with simple flexibility.





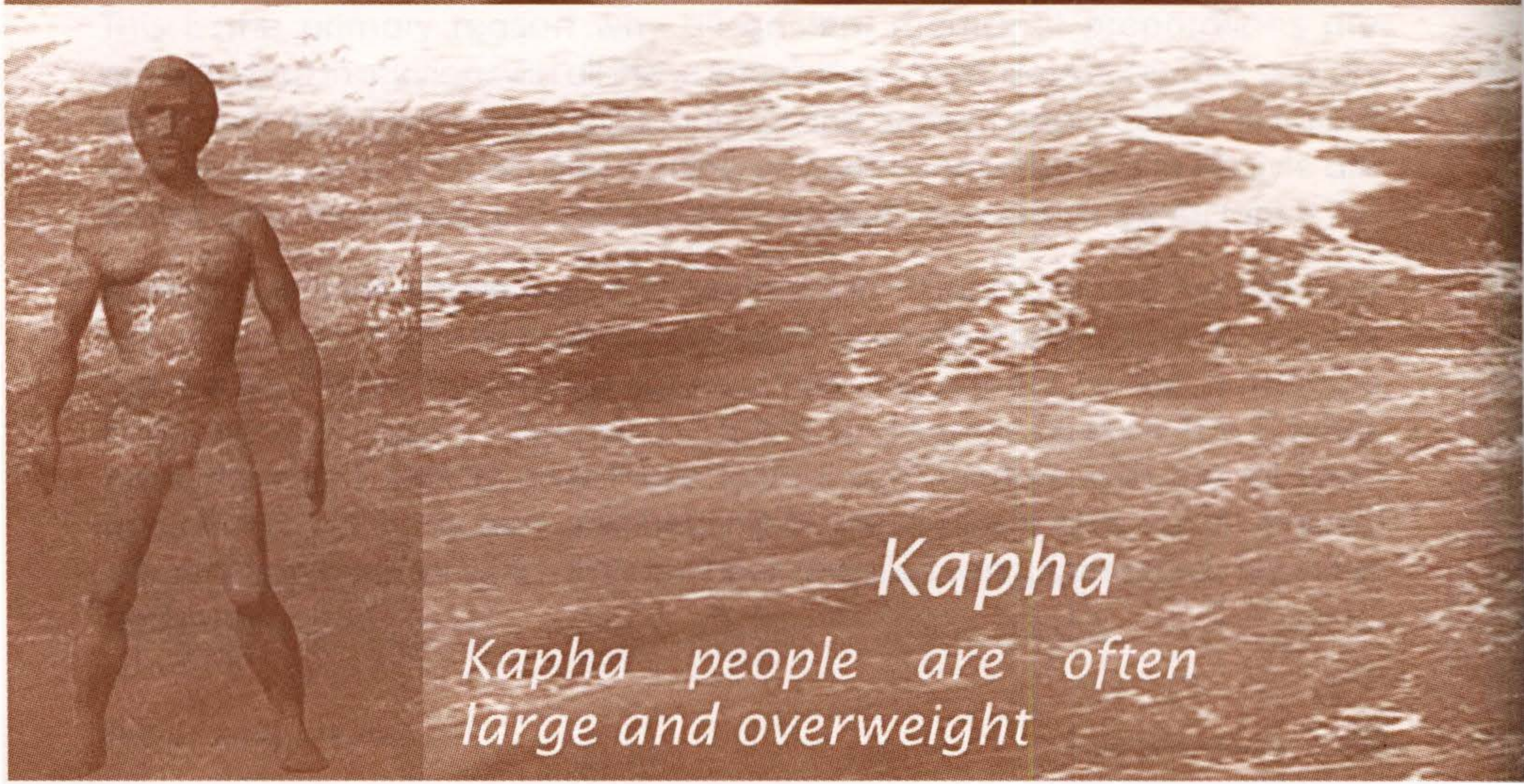
Vatha

Vatha people tend to be thin with light bones



Pitta

Pitta people are medium build and fair - skinned



Kapha

Kapha people are often large and overweight

BALANCING THE DOSHAMS THROUGH HERBAL PREPARATIONS

Any of the weakened doshams can be brought into balance in several ways. Medicinal preparations based on the Siddha principles of the six basic tastes and its properties are a highly valuable and plausible avenue.

Given below is a medicinal preparation formulated to balance any of the three weakened Doshams:

For the weakened three doshams only - AMUKKURA CHURNAM

First, gather dried parts of the following spices and herbs:

English Name		Tamil Name	Quantity
1	Cloves	Lavangam	10 grams
2	Cinnamon Buds	Sirungagapoo	20 grams
3	Cardamom Seeds	Elarisi	40 grams
4	Black Pepper	Milagu	80 grams
5	Long Pepper	Thippili	160 grams
6	Dry Ginger	Chukku	320 grams
7	Withania root or winter cherry	Amukkara (Aswagandha in Sanskrit)	640 grams
8	Cane sugar	Sarkarai	1280 grams

Process:

First roast the long pepper, and then grind together very finely the first seven items mentioned above. Powder the sugar separately. Then mix the sugar with the powdered spices and the Amukkara (winter cherry). Store the powder in a glass jar with a proper lid or cork.

For stimulating a weakened Vatham Dosham

One to two grams of the powder mixed with one tablespoonful of Gingili (sesame) oil can be taken in the morning and in the evening on an empty stomach, one hour before food or two and a half hours after food, for 11, 22, 33 or 45 days, depending on the symptoms.

For stimulating a weakened Pittam Dosham

One to two grams of the herbal powder mixed with 1 to 2 teaspoons of melted ghee can be taken in the morning and in the evening on an empty stomach, one hour before food, for 21 or 48 days, depending upon the imbalance in the dosham.

For stimulating a weakened Kapham Dosham

One to two grams of the herbal powder mixed with 1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons honey can be taken in the morning and in the evening on an empty stomach, one hour before food for 30 days.

This herbal mixture cures colic, hiccups, chlorosis, rheumatic diseases, insomnia, excessive internal heat, and spermatorrhea. It also relieves stress and strengthens a weakened nervous system. If the individual's health and immune system are already strong it can also serve as a good aphrodisiac for men. From my experience, it prevents illness caused even by environmental pollution.

Balancing an Aggravated Vatham Dosham

MAHA VATHA CHURNAM

English Name	Indian Names	Quantity
1 Powdered dry Senna Leaves		200 grams
2 Powdered dry skin or outer part of chebulic myrobalam	Harar (Sanskrit); Haritaki (Hindi); Kadukkai (Tamil)	50 grams
3 Powdered dry skin or outer part of Beleric myrobalam	Bahe (Sanskrit); Biblitaki (Hindi); Thanrikkai (Tamil)	50 grams
4 Powdered dry outer part of Embelic myrobalam	Amla (Sanskrit); Amalaki (Hindi); Nellikai (Tamil)	50 grams
5 Powdered dry Coriander seeds		100 grams
6 Powdered pure Asafoetida		10 grams
7 Rock salt		5 grams

Mix all these powders and store them in an airtight glass jar.

Dose:

One teaspoon of the herbal mixture mixed in a cup of warm water should be taken at night, before going to bed, at least 2 hours after dinner. Use this medicine nightly for 3 consecutive nights of each month, for three months continuously. (Totally, 9 nights in three months).

Balancing an Aggravated Kapham Dosham

PANCHA-DEEPAKINI CHURNAM:

Materials needed:

Dry ginger	1 part
Black pepper	1 part
Long pepper (roast before powdering it)	1 part
Cumin seeds	1 part
Cardamom	1 part
Sugar	5 parts

Process:

Grind the first five ingredients very finely. Pulverize the sugar separately, and then mix well with the herbal compound.

Dosage:

1 to 2 grams of this mixed with honey should be taken at least twice a day, one hour before food, for 21 days.

This herbal mixture can balance all three vitiated doshams and indirectly works to balance the Kapham dosham. According to the Siddha system if the Vatha and Pitta doshams remain vitiated for a long period of time it may lead to Kapha related diseases.

The word 'pancha' literally means five, and the word 'deepam' connotes a lamp; the word 'agni' stands for fire. This herbal mixture encourages the Agni in the digestive tract to function in a uniform and moderate manner.

A loss of appetite, biliousness, indigestion, flatulence, nausea, lung ailments and sinusitis due to weak digestion can be cured by this medicinal preparation.

Balancing an Aggravated Pittam Dosham

MANAPPAAGU

Manappaagu is flavoured medicinal syrup. The flavour is due to the ingredients used in its preparation. The honey and sugar being a part of the recipe not only sweetens the taste but also serves to preserve it.

Equipment required:

A wide mouthed metal container to boil the syrup in, (large enough to hold the syrup while it is boiling) and a ladle to handle the syrup and a large spatula to stir it.

Process for making syrups:

Sugar is dissolved in the prescribed medium. It is better to first warm the medium and then to add the sugar to it slowly, stirring continuously to avoid charring of the sugar or any sticking to the bottom. Charring can spoil the syrup by giving it a burnt smell and bitter taste. Heating should be slow and gentle so that the mixture is continuously maintained at boiling temperature. When the mixture attains a syrup consistency the vessel can be removed from the fire. The syrup is to be filtered if necessary while it is still quite hot as handling of the syrup can usually be quite messy. *Care should be taken that the juices used in the preparation are thoroughly filtered before heating.* In case a scum forms on the surface of the syrup it should be removed carefully and discarded. If honey is used do not add until syrup has cooled.

Storage:

A properly prepared Manappaagu syrup remains in good condition indefinitely if kept properly closed with a stopper and stored. However it is advisable to use it within six months of preparation. Narrow mouthed glass bottles with screw caps are ideal containers for it. It is desirable to leave some space in the container while filling up.

MAATHULAI MANAPPAAGU

Materials needed: (all parts equal by weight).

	In Tamil
Sugar candy	(kalkandu)
Rose water	(panneer)
Pomegranate juice	(mathulam pazha saru)
Honey	(thein)

Process:

Mix all the 4 ingredients and prepare the syrup by heating the sugar candy, rose water, pomegranate juice and carefully boiling (as described above). Honey may be mixed with the syrup only after it has cooled.

Indications:

- It can pacify an aggravated Pitta dosham and any resulting illness.
- Anaemia, pernicious anaemia, splenic anaemia and all other anaemia disorders.

- Anorexia, emesis, and the burning sensation of the palms and soles of the feet.
- Also useful as a tonic in pregnancy and pre and post-operative convalescence.

Dosage:

10 ml mixed with 60 ml of pure water can be taken 2 to 3 times a day, half to one hour before food for 21 days.

Contra Indications:

People suffering chronic constipation and diabetic patients should not administer this preparation.



THATHUS - MATRIX OF THE BODY

The human body is composed of seven tissues or Thathus. These seven tissues that support the body are formed in a typical and unique way. They emerge one out of the other. This sort of successive and consecutive formation is called as Thathu Parinamam, the evolution of the fundamental tissues. They are formed from the quintessence of the food consumed by us. To put it simply our body is made up of what we eat.

These fundamental tissues are:

Plasma - Ninaneer, Rasa

Blood - Chenneer, Rakta

Muscle - Mamisam, Mamsa

Fat - Koluppu, Medas

Bone - Enbu, Asthi

Bone marrow - Moolai, Majjai

Reproductive fluid - Suronita, Sukra

Their unique nature of evolution and formation of...

...Rasa to Rakta...Rakta to Mamsa...Mamsa to Medas...Medas to Asthi...Asthi to Majjai...and lastly Majjai to Sukra...

...happens according to the food we have eaten and the process of digestion. For example the Rasa Thathu is formed after the first stage of digestion and the Rakta Thathu on the second stage and so on.

The platform that supports an ideal functioning of this nature of transformation right from the first Rasa Thathu to the last Sukra Thathu to take place in a harmonious way is the Vatha Dosham. It is only in association with this bio-regulating force that the onward transformation of one Thathu to another can take place. The reason being that Vatha is the only dosham exhibiting principles of movement. The other two Doshams, Kapha and Pitta are unable to move independently and go wherever movement takes them just as clouds get carried by the wind. Hence we know that the Vatha dosha is the activating bio-regulating force in our body that enables us to do activities related to movement including speak, walk, etc. If the body feels depleted of Vatha it becomes entirely listless. The sharpness of our sensory, perceptive and motor organs is also dependent on the proper functioning of the Vatha force.

We need to understand that since the seven Thathus and the five Bhuthas (elements) need to be assimilated from the food we eat, it is imperative that the food we eat carries a combination of all the different necessary components. We cannot eat only solid or only liquid foods. We need to eat all the four varieties. For instance, for us to nourish and form the earth aspect

into our body we need bulky or heavy foods. For the formation of the liquid aspects of our body we need the intake of liquids and to improve and enhance our digestive capacity we need the fire aspect, which we get from the spices we eat, etc.

THE ARCHITECTS

Food, as soon as it enters our mouth is met and worked on first by the Water element - our saliva - a subordinate of the Kapha dosham network. The subordinates of the Vatha dosham execute the different chewing and swallowing activities. As our food travels down from the mouth to the digestive region it is loosened and softened to liquid state. In this part itself a Pitta dosham subordinate plays its part, separates the essential from the inessential and brings it down to the chosen nutrient fluid, the Anna Rasa. The rest is declared as waste and eliminated from the body in the form of urine and faeces.

This completes the process of digestion, leaving the nutrient fluid ready to be assimilated into the body for its nourishment. We will now travel the journey of the Anna Rasa (nutrient fluid) right up to its end and see the ultimate effect it has on our body. In the course of this journey we will meet with different processes, the various subtle catalysts, the results of the cooking and conversion functions, and its waste emissions, the elemental nature of each, the qualitative impact it has on the body and so on.

In order to understand the balanced interfunction of all the seven Thathus we should first know their independent functions.

RASA THATHU (Ninaneer)

As the Anna Rasa voyages on it is cooked, converted, and, partly consolidated and partly potentiated for its onward course. This journey builds, nourishes and maintains the seven tissues or Thathus that make the human form - plasma, blood, flesh, fat, bone, bone marrow and the reproductive fluid. From the first to the last each one is born from the previous in a sequential and successive order and all seven remain interconnected in all aspects.

We start with the formed Anna Rasa in the body. It is now met by the subtle fire,

Rasa Thathu agni, which facilitates the replenishment of the first Thathu or tissue Rasa or Plasma. The fire of the Rasa Thathu Agni cooks the available nutrient fluid and converts it to plasma, lymph forms etc, according to the need of the body until it gets sufficiently nourished.

The Rasa Thathu Agni continues to cook a portion of the nutrient fluid until it converts to a higher potentiate for the next Thathu in line.

From the cooking and conversion that has taken place so far a certain waste is inevitable - this waste carries the Kapha quality and shows as little phlegm in the body.

The element of the Rasa Thathu is Kapha, Water.

Before we meet the next, we can observe a certain effects on the body from the conversion that has just taken place. The cooking of the Anna Rasa spreads a refreshing feeling all over the body as plasma formation takes place. As plasma is found all over the body the refreshing feeling travels and spreads into every corner and space. As this conversion is instantaneous the body also receives its nourishment immediately and instantly gets refreshed; just as we feel refreshed or revived as soon as we drink a glass of water.

This very refreshing experience turns into a psychological state and we are able to meet our activities and situations with the same 'refreshing' outlook.

What happens in case the food we eat does not carry sufficient nutrition? The very first conversion fails to take place satisfactorily. This shows as depletion in the first tissue. The psychological implications of this feeling of depletion show evidence as feelings of being drained or weary etc.

RAKTHA THATHU (Chenneer)

Picking up from the part of the highly potentiated portion of the Rasa Thathu let us see where it leads. The Rasa Thathu agni cooks this portion until it transforms into the next successive tissue - the Raktha Thathu or Blood. This portion also contains its own corresponding Agni - the Raktha Thathu Agni that continues to cook it and generate more blood in the body to a satisfactory point. The same pattern of conversion continues. A portion of the Raktha Thathu is cooked further until it reaches the required transformed state of the third tissue of the body. This time, the cooking and conversion has generated a waste in bile form with the pitta qualities.

Once again, we can observe the impact of the fresh formation of blood on the entire body. An enlivening or revitalising feeling spreads throughout the body. This takes place as the formation of red blood cells. Raktha Thathu, in the form of the Fire element joined by the water element, gives the body a healthy glow when well formed and nourished. The warmth in the blood keeps the skin soft to touch whereas a dissatisfactory formation of this tissue shows as rough or dry and cracked skin.

Psychologically, a depletion of this reflects as dullness, mentally, physically as well as in the skin texture.

MAMSA THATHU (Mamisam)

Once again, the Raktha Thathu agni cooks the potentiated portion until it has transformed to the next, the third tissue of the body, Mamsa or Flesh. With the required conversion catalyst inherent within it, this tissue continues to

work and generate more flesh as required by the body. This process continues until this tissue is sufficiently replenished. Once again it sets aside the required portion to be cooked further and transformed into the fourth tissue of the body. The waste formation at this stage is the water element that releases as fluid from bodily orifices. The flesh formed carries the Earth element.

The psychological impacts felt by the body from the formation of the flesh tissue are qualities of the earth element - Feeling of grounding, discernment - a cemented and well formed outlook. A lack in this stage evidently reflects as a sense of feeling scattered or dispersed. An excess formation of Mamsa is seen physically on the body as heaviness around the abdomen/ midriff, thighs etc. And if the formation is in lack then the result in the body is muscle reduction, pinching or stabbing pains in various places in the body.

MEDAS THATHU (Koluppu)

From the essential part of Mamsa is born the fourth tissue, the Medas Thathu or Fat. The inherent Medas Thathu agni continues its cooking and conversion until the necessary transformation takes place and the body gets replenished with sufficient fatty tissue. The waste generated here is in the form of sweat as the fat is burning while cooking. The elemental composition of this tissue is Water combined with Fire.

In the body, this tissue is seen as physical weight gain and an excessive formation of this tissue is obesity. A depletion of this tissue brings about debility.

Its subtler essence radiates an embracing feel in the individual, a feeling of being 'held'. It also radiates unctuousness which reflects as sociability or flexibility as a part of the individual's nature. A converse of these characteristics displays rigidity, anti social behavioural tendencies etc.

ASTHI THATHU (Enbu)

The potential portion of the Medas tissue creates the fifth tissue of the human body - the Asthi Thathu - Bone. The Asthi Thathu is supplemented and replenished throughout the body by the cooking nature of its Agni or Fire. Bone in our body is comprised of the Air element combined with the Earth element which gives it its precise shape and form. The waste generated at this stage of tissue formation is in the form of nails, hair etc.

Just as the function of the bones within our body is to give the body its frame and provide support, its psychological reflections are no different. They give the individual psychic grounded-ness, constructive mentality and well formed ideas etc. An individual with a weak bone structure would psychically also feel ungrounded, airy, frivolous etc.

Along with the essential part of the bone tissue let proceed to the next tissue.

MAJJA THATHU (Moolai)

As this essential portion continues its cooking journey the resultant conversion is the formation of the sixth tissue of the human body, Majja Thathu - Bone marrow. The Majja Thathu agni continues its cooking process until a sufficient amount of bone marrow has been produced in the body. This tissue is formed of the water element and reflects qualities of it. The waste that emerges from this stage of cooking is in the form of secretion from the eyes.

As the work of bone marrow within our body is to 'fill', its psychic counterpart is the same. It shows as contentment and satisfaction. An imbalance in the Majja Thathu psychically reflects as discontentment, dissatisfaction etc.

SUKRA THATHU (Suronita)

From the potentiated portion of Majja is born the last of the seven tissues within the human body, the Sukra Thathu or reproductive fluid. The inherent agni cooks the Majja Thathu until it transforms into the Sukra Thathu. This is the most essential of Anna Rasa, of the food taken in the first stage. It is the element of water. Although the Sukra Thathu also cooks in its formation, no further tissue formation takes place in the body. A few resultant effects are observed in the body. The work of the reproductive fluid in our body is to procreate. Psychically this function reflects as an individual's wish for a successor, maternal or paternal instincts, creativity etc. Physically it reflects as the suppleness in the body. A derangement in this stage reflects as low libido, inability of achievement and a fear of death.

This is the voyage the Anna Rasa takes! It is cooked stage by stage to the intended result. Its elemental nature undergoes change at each stage, resulting in the physical formation of different tissues. It releases all inessentials as waste and leaves the essential portions to be cooked further. As it undergoes elemental changes, it contributes qualities and characteristics in the individual's character and personality.

Over and above these simultaneous effects the Siddhas speak of one more consequence that takes place during this entire voyage; the qualitative result of this journey - the quintessence of Amritha which also returns to the voyage and nourishes it qualitatively. This is the immunity factor of the body; its shield!

In case the nutritional voyage doesn't fulfil the requirement of proper tissue formation etc then the quintessence spreading at the end of the seventh tissue formation is equally low, thereby dropping the strength of immunity in the body, making it an open field for disease to take root.

All in all, by the normal functioning of all the seven Thathus a balanced Thathu activity is attained and a failure of this causes the body to fall ill.



Let us see why the Siddhas give equal importance to the Mala (excreta) as they do to the Thathus. Although, all Mala is meant to be expelled from the body it still plays a specific role. For instance our eyes and nose would turn completely dry if they do not have any Mala within them thus causing great discomfort and upsetting the normal functioning of these organs.

Faeces, urine and sweat are the three important Malas within the human body that carry out specific roles. The function of faeces is to support the body just as pillars support a building. If this substance is totally expelled from the body it can weaken the body to a great extent. In a person already suffering from the complete depletion of all seven Thathus it is the faecal matter that acts as the last sustaining factor of the body. The person derives his strength only from the faeces within the body. That is why it is said that as the human body is used to keeping Mala within it, a complete depletion of it can cause greater harm to the body than its accumulation.

Urine acts as a carrier of all exudation of the body. The moisture content in the body should not be completely depleted or removed and sweat performs the important function of retaining the essential amount of moisture content in the body. If there is no warmth the skin would turn parched, dry and start peeling, turning black in colour. It is because of the retention of the right amount of moisture as sweat that the skin stays soft.

When these three Malas perform and function optimally they attain an ideal, balanced state.

We can conclude calling these some of the necessary conditions for the healthy functioning of the body. In order to fulfil other necessary conditions for healthy living, the state of mind, the organs of perception and movement and the consciousness should also function in a balanced and well-integrated manner.



SUVAI

Ancient Sages say,

'The body is made of food. It takes the food Earth offers. This food is made up of six tastes. Mind identifies itself with the body and through it with the world.'

Earth has been continuously refining herself from the beginning of time; weaving and refining the cosmic memory through the genetic coding of all life forms. It is for this reason that cosmic communion prevails among each of the earth's inhabitants. The doshams embody the karmic and genetic codes we are irrevocably linked to and affected by; the universal code of the stars, planets, galaxies, minerals and elements. Through this knowledge of various body types the Siddha system of medicine has systemized certain codes of

human behaviour in relation to food and its taste. Every food-taste, every emotion, every dream is a memory of past and reflection of the future. The five elements continuously transmute into each other to create atoms, molecules, minerals, foods, and all life forms. But food is the keeper of all the five elements; and in its transformation the body of life is formed.

Human identification in its balance makes man an integrated part of the whole cosmos and its imbalance leads to sorrow in life. Ayurveda defines the existence of only three Malas. But the Siddha Tradition declares the existence of Malas even in the Tattwas (variables of Nature); they are the three impurities that curtain the light of consciousness when not in balance or are a transparent medium to the ever-shining consciousness, Chit. These three primordial impurities are Aanavam, Kanmam and Maya. Aanavam is the identification aspect that feels the need to prove or establish its own individual nature by its action or function (karma), enchanted by the delusive nature of worldly affliction, Maya.

As seen earlier, physical residue must be eliminated in a proper manner for the function of a healthy body. At the same time, a required proportion still needs to remain or be withheld by the body. This is required for the survival of the body. Likewise, Aanavam in its Satvic aspect serves to integrate and ground the individuality, by its proper functioning and the right inter-connectedness.

Life in the cosmos expresses to find its symbiotic unit by way of resonance with the whole cosmic function. Nature has provided creatures with unique qualities so each, non-living as well as living, has their own quality of being.

As a human being starts to consume food, his encounter with taste asserts his individuality as a part of the whole cosmos. It identifies with each matter through taste and in this way makes it a part of himself. Through the process of taking in food he re-invokes the symbiotic nature of cosmic memory. So this internal assimilation, which he makes a part of himself, in turn makes him a part of the larger cosmos. For instance, even a TREE!

Just take the case of a Tree. Nature nourishes trees by offering them enough space to grow; by offering the vital air from the atmosphere; by offering enough sunlight and therefore heat and enough water along with the right soil to its roots for grounding. Yes, a tree is nurtured in Nature by an acceptance from Her five dimensions, called as the five elements. Ultimately, after the tree grows it gives back the same to Nature and completes a mutual cycle; to replenish and nurture the other living beings on the earth. A tree makes the earth more binding, it invites rain and offers oxygen to living beings and even after its death is used as timber for our homes. As my teacher relevantly said, *'A tree is the ideal living being eligible to live in this earth as it gives back whatever it has taken from mother nature, in a better way. It takes all the raw energy offered by Mother Nature, works on it and makes life beautiful by offering back whatever it has taken in a more sophisticated form so that all inhabitants on earth can be beneficiaries'*.

In this way, a human tree is also a micro cosmos. The Siddha system of medicine says, *'instead of consuming nutrition directly (as supplements), eating wholesome food is the most proper way to energetic living as it re-invokes the function of the cosmos in him.'* Taste is all about causing transformation in the way people experience cosmic reality and their lives within themselves. In this way, the democratic Siddha system of curing and healing of nature (man), by nature (herbs and plants), for nature (mind and body balance) has served many a generation well. This is what the Siddha path explains, *'eating itself is a way of worshiping Nature and relating with the food becomes yoga itself.'* There is a tree in Tamil Nadu called 'Aala maram' (ficus religiosa), a species similar to a banyan tree. It first grows upwards from the ground branching high towards the sky. After its phase of aerial growth it sends the roots that grow from its branches towards the ground, the earth. From its aerial position it reaches to the ground by its roots to implant more roots for new trees to grow. After several years, we cannot find the first tree. Even if they seem to be many trees there is really only one tree in this garden of ficus trees. The cosmos works in the same way. There seem to be multitudes of separate beings but everything has the same undercurrent nature of cosmic memory and genetic code representing the mini-cosmos and again returning to the grand Universe.

I heard a folklore story of how a plant became medicine:

Thousands of years ago, a woman, her husband and her mother-in-law lived in a hut in a small village. One winter day the young woman had a cold and cough. She had set some water to heat to soothe her sore throat and racking cough. Her angry mother-in-law, seeing her woodpile being reduced for such a flimsy reason decided to disrupt the daughter-in law's plans. She stealthily plucked a few leaves from a nearby plant and dropped them into the water and went away, happy that her quota of 'daughter-in-law bashing' for the day had been achieved with so little effort! The cough racked young lady upon seeing the leaves floating on the surface of the water removed them and drank the infusion. Her aching throat felt so soothed that every time she heated water to drink she added the leaves. These fragrant leaves were ones used by sages in the forest during prayers and rituals, known as 'tulsi' (holy basil). Thus, it is believed, was born the ritual of making 'infusions' and home remedies for ailments.

On this note we enter into the Siddhas world of taste - what They call Suvai; Ayurveda calls Rasa and in English it is called Taste or Sap. Our Ancients found the food offered by our earth categorised into six basic tastes, each having a distinctive nature and qualitative impact.

Let us see how...

Down the ladder of evolution, from Space unto Earth there exist a common set of qualities with their complimentary parts. This very platform is used to asses Tastes as they too are formed of the five natural elements of Nature. Starting from Space, right down to Earth, the properties permute between...

HotCold
Heavy.....Light
Oily.....Dry

By now we know our body is composed of the Thathus, and how the Malas perform their necessary functions; all of which happens under the influence of what we eat. Now we can see what exactly gives food the ability to impose this strong influence upon our body.

It is called 'Padaartham' or edible substance. Padaartham is that which constitutes certain properties or qualities capable of producing an action or effect. This action or effect is determined by the qualities of the edible substance, which the Siddhas call Suvai, or flavour. It plays a vital role and displays the nature of both food and medicine consumed by us. Each flavour or Suvai has the ability to influence its own characteristic property upon the three-bio-regulating forces, as well as on the qualities of the mind, (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas). Based on this principle, Suvai is used to regulate both the physical and the mental states.

There are six types of flavours:

Sweet, Sour, Salt, Bitter, Pungent and Astringent.

(Bitter is the taste of Neem leaves; Pungent is the taste of chilli or black pepper; and astringent is the taste of plantain flower or of areca nut.)

A flavour can increase or decrease the corresponding relevant dosham. This is the factor or principle used in choosing an apt diet for an individual. It constitutes an important part of the Siddha healing treatment for a person as the Siddha healer prescribes a particular diet regime to the person according to the person's disease. This is also because the food eaten should not interfere with the work of the medicine and food itself is used to work like medicine.

The six classified flavours divide into three groups.

The first group	Sweet, Sour and Salt
The second group	Bitter, Pungent and Astringent
The third group	Astringent, Bitter and Sweet.

Let us see the corresponding response of the bio-regulating forces to each group.

Dosha	Decrease	Increase
Vatha	Sweet, Sour, Salt	Bitter, Pungent, Astringent
Kapha	Bitter, Pungent, Astringent	Sweet, Sour, Salt
Pitta	Astringent, Bitter, Sweet	Sour, Salt, Pungent

The above table describes how each dosha responds to each different group of flavours. Now let us see how each response and alteration in the functioning of each dosham can serve as a healing platform.

The first group of flavour, Sweet, Sour, Salt, is seen to reduce the Vatha dosham. Therefore these tastes can be purposefully used for a person suffering an aggravated Vatha condition to help pacify it. Based on its pacifying influence on Vatha it is called as the Vatha pacifying group.

The remaining three flavours, Bitter, Pungent and Astringent increase Vatha and hence are termed as the Vatha aggravating group as they can be purposefully used to stimulate a weakened Vatha condition of a person.

Using the same approach if we take a look at the Kapha dosha responses we see that the behaviour is exactly opposite. The first group, Bitter, Pungent and Astringent increase the Kapha in the body whereas Kapha gets reduced or pacified by Sweet, Sour and Salt flavours. That is why a person suffering from excess phlegm, which is a condition of excessive Kapha, is advised against taking any Sweet, Sour, Salt foods and instead, are prescribed a diet to help pacify the Kapha.

As for Pittam, the Astringent, Bitter and Sweet tastes pacify it and the remaining three flavours Sour, Salt and Pungent aggravate it. This ancient principle is put to use as an essential part of treatment for a person suffering jaundice as jaundice is an excess Pitta condition; an imbalance in the bile flow and its content in the body. The person is put on a completely bland diet. Flavours like Sour, Salt and Pungent that increase Pitta are completely withdrawn from the diet. Milk is continued, as it is of sweet taste. And medicines of Bitter and Astringent flavours are prescribed to assist in bringing the Pitta down.

The knowledge of specific taste substances is necessary and highly effective to keep the bio-regulating forces in a balanced state. Moreover, if one is able to recognise the affected doshams from the disease and the nature of imbalance, i.e. increase or decrease, it is possible to bring them into their normal state using appropriate tastes as medicine through food. In this way this important principle is applied as an essential part of a Siddha healing and treatment.

The Siddhas have revealed one of the many types of pulse diagnosis to be based on this flavour theory. Pulse diagnosis is considered in both hands as the pulse of each hand carries certain specifics of the three tastes based on which treatment can proceed.

SAP OF LIFE

Each flavour or taste has a specific characteristic. Let us take a glance at each of their properties and how they are instrumental in maintaining health.

The Siddhas pinpoint the nature of a flavour to correspond to a quality of certain elements and its characteristics. In other words the five elements prelude the formation of the flavours. Let us see how these elements constitute a flavour and thereby impart their elemental qualities to it.

Consistent to their nature, earth and water help in promoting bulk and growth whereas fire, wind and ether help in reducing bulk. This is because earth and water are heavy in nature and the other three elements are lighter. This implies the flavours to be either heavy and bulk promoting or light and bulk reducing. All treatments can be governed by this principle.

With this as our base parameter let us venture into each of the six natural tastes.

Sweet; Sour; Salt; Pungent; Bitter; Astringent

The Siddha Tradition reiterates everything to be inter-related and inter connected - the basic nature of Inter-being. Even here, we find the six tastes inter related in different levels and complimentary ways based on their elemental properties.

Sweet

When we mention the taste Sweet - it is not be misunderstood as ready made sweet tasting food available in the market but to be deeply understood as that food that quickly satiates. If you have noticed, certain foods can fill you with satisfaction and for the moment completely take away any further desire to eat. Even a small quantity of such a food can do the trick. This is its quality and its influence. All of these influences imply its heavy nature.

Secondly, since it instantly nullifies the appetite for more it evidently has to be of a cold nature as it is fire (heat) that is responsible for triggering appetite.

Lastly, as sweetness does not localise itself and instead spreads, it indicates its flowing nature implying it to be oily.

From this, its elemental composition is comprehensible - Earth and Water.

Foods of corresponding qualities are - Starchy foods, carbohydrates, sugar, fats and amino acids.

Sour

This brings us to the second taste. The elemental composition of Sour is Earth and Fire. This describes the journey 'Sweet' takes and alters itself.

As we know, lemon juice drinks are used as appetisers, which implies the presence of the fire element and so its property is hot. Let's see how Sour gets its heavy and oily properties by a small experiment.

Cook rice and potato (both sweet in nature) and leave it for two days outside the refrigerator. By the third day you can see that it would have gone 'sour'. In the start the food was sweet in nature - cold, heavy and oily, but in a matter of two days its state altered and turned Sour, making it hot, heavy and oily.

Foods of corresponding qualities are - organic acids

Salt

Salt is the third taste and its elemental composition is Water and Fire.

The sharp taste of salt implies it is hot in nature and therefore a stimulant for appetite. Another simple experiment illustrates the properties of the salt taste.

We often add water to things that are sweet or sour in order to dilute it and make it palatable, for example lemon juice. How does water have the ability to dilute the strength of the original taste? The natural salts contained in water give it this quality.

Sometimes we even add a bit of extra salt to lemon juice after we have added water to make it more palatable and we already know how vital an ingredient salt is in cooking. It enhances the taste of food. This indicates that salt (whether in water or otherwise) is a solvent by which we recognise the water element in it.

Foods of corresponding qualities are salts.

Pungent

Coming to the centreline, we reach the fourth taste.

If we place something pungent on our tongue we find the taste is sharp and can leave one gasping - you feel you are on fire and sometimes it can make you frantically jump about. This experience describes the presence of Air as well as Fire in it. The pungent taste stands for qualities like hot, light and dry.

Foods of corresponding qualities are essential and volatile oils and phenols.

Bitter

The fifth natural taste is Bitter. If you place something bitter on your tongue the taste of bitterness spreads everywhere.

Secondly, it is difficult to change the bitter taste by replacing it with some other taste and it even has a tendency to stay for quite a while. This itself indicates its range on the higher end of the evolutionary ladder.

As we said the bitterness doesn't remain localised and spreads everywhere. This implies its elemental composition to be of Air and Space which give it the qualities of light, dry and cold.

Foods of corresponding qualities are alkaloids, glycosides, bitter principles.

Astringent

This is the sixth and the last in the natural taste lineage and is unique in its own way. Something astringent will leave a taste relatively localised - not spreading in nature. This is a very clear indication of its Earth nature. But the astringent taste is also sharp and dry making the tongue rough or dry in that place. This is characteristic of the air element.

Therefore, composed of Air and Earth, the sixth taste shows properties of dry, light and cold.

Foods of corresponding qualities are Tannins.

Taste	Major Dosha Affected	Elements	Major Influence In body	Example
Inippu (Madhu)(Sweet)	↑ Kapha ↓ Pitta	Water + earth	Anabolic & increase in weight	Rice/dal/jaggery /tuber milk/egg
Pulippu (Amla) (Sour)	↑ Pitta ↓ Vata	Earth +Fire	Stimulate agni & improves taste	Lime/tomato/ citrus/fruit
Uppu (Lavana) (Salty)	↑ Pitta ↓ Vata	Fire +Water	Imparts taste to food	Fish/Salt
Kasappu (Tikta) (bitter)	↑ Vata ↓ Kapha	Air +Space	Reduces weight	Fenugreek/bitter gourd/turmeric spice
Kaarppu (Katu) (Pungent)	↑ Pitta ↑ Vata ↓ Kapha	Fire +Air	Stimulates hunger	Pepper/Red Chillies
Thuvarppu (Kashaya) (Astringent)	↑ Vata ↓ Kapha	Earth + Air	Good for Skin	Honey

After this assessment, we now look at how each of them affects our constitution and influences the Tridoshams. The six tastes maintain the balance of the Tridoshams by way of our daily diet, but their ability to influence is put to much deeper use medicinally as it has the strength to deeply and qualitatively penetrate the doshams.



THE TRIDOSHAMS AND THE SIX TASTES

Let us start with the Vatha Dosham - the Air and Space duo and observe the impact of each taste. For reference we can turn to the tabulated tastes for their elemental composition.

VATHA

When a Vatha dominate person experiences imbalance and the governing dosham is not in the inherent ratio of the individuals Prakrithi, the Vatha is said to be 'deranged'. The derangement can occur in two ways - either it is stagnant or it is aggravated.

The characteristics of the Vatha dosham are light, airy, quick, irregular etc. In case of stagnation, the Vatha person feels dull or static which indicates the deranged Vatha is to be stimulated, enhanced and increased enough to fall back in its original ratio by introducing hot, light and airy tastes - the Air dominant tastes.

Symptoms of a stagnating Vatha dosham are Cold feet and hands, low blood pressure, sinking pulse, fainting, stiffness of joints etc.

For Stagnated	Air and Fire	Pungent
Vatha - Air and Space	Air and Space	Bitter
	Air and Earth	Astringent

All the above-mentioned tastes are composed of the Air element and stimulate the Vatha Dosham by increasing it and thereby the Vatha predominance is enhanced.

On the other hand, when the Vatha dosham is aggravated it shows as over-activity, anxiety, hypertension etc. all of which are expressions of exaggeration. The exaggeration of the Vatha is to be decreased and brought back into its harmonious equilibrium by introducing the other three tastes.

Symptoms of an aggravated Vatha dosham are body pain, agitation, restlessness etc.

For Aggravated	Earth and Water	Sweet
Vatha - Air and Space	Earth and Fire	Sour
	Water and Fire	Salt

Introducing tastes that are not Air dominates helps pacify the aggravated Vatha by having a grounding effect on them.

KAPHA

The elements in Kapha dosham are Earth and Water. Therefore, tastes comprising of the earth and water elements will stimulate or increase the Kapha dosham. Those tastes comprising of the Air element work conversely and decrease or pacify the Kapha dosham. The relevant tastes are:

Symptoms of a stagnating Kapha dosham are lethargy, inflexibility of joints, phlegmatic diseases, respiratory disorders, poor digestion etc.

For Stagnated	Earth and Water	Sweet
Kapha - Earth and Water	Earth and Fire	Sour
	Water and Fire	Salt

Symptoms of an aggravated Kapha dosham are obesity, rheumatism, cardiac disorders, disorders in blood circulation etc.

For Aggravated	Air and Fire	Pungent
Kapha - Earth and Water	Air and Space	Bitter
	Air and Earth	Astringent

PITTA

We come to the third bio-regulating force, Pittam. The elemental composition of this force is Fire and Water.

In order to pacify an aggravated Pitta Dosham the following three tastes are put to medicinal use as they are converse to the Pitta nature.

The symptoms of an aggravated Pitta dosham are giddiness, vomiting, headache, skin diseases, bilious disorders etc.

For Aggravated	Earth and Water	Sweet
Pittam - Fire and Water	Air and Space	Bitter
	Air and Earth	Astringent

And to stimulate or increase a stagnated Pitta Dosham the three tastes of fiery qualities are used:

The symptoms of a stagnating Pitta dosham are poor digestion, pigmentation problems, eye disorders etc.

For Stagnated	Water and Fire	Salt
Pittam - Fire and Water	Earth and Fire	Sour
	Air and Fire	Pungent

We must also remember that if these tastes are being introduced through medicinal preparations the diet of the individual must also be altered accordingly. The inappropriate or causative tastes must be eliminated for the time being until the doshams are brought back into their natural equilibrium.



Another influential factor we encounter concerning tastes is our qualitative experience of it.

For instance, by tasting something bitter, astringent or even sweet we experience a 'constrictive' feeling or response within our body; whereas with salt, sour and pungent tastes we feel more expansive or more outward.

If we incorporate these expansive or constrictive qualities to embody an attitude it reveals a host of interesting revelations. We discussed in the start of the chapter how Man enjoys an integrated and grounded life with his identification aspect, his Ahamkara or Aanavam in ideal balance and how it brings suffering when it is in imbalance. *In other words our feeling of balance co-relates with the sense of being satiated or content - evidently, we are speaking of the sweet taste here as by its nature it doesn't stimulate for more, but satisfies.*

But just as soon as 'sweetness' recedes from Man's memory, a desire for it is born again. Man, anywhere on this planet, is always looking for this sweet satiating feeling to fill his life and never leave. This introduces us to a journey and travel through a varying range of qualities.

Whenever Man tries to grasp, acquire or possess this *Sweetness* - it betrays him and changes into something else. Ever seen years of friendship turn *Sour*, tainted by greed, envy, jealousy? What happened to the rice and the potato, left for two days, can happen even to age-old friendships. They turn Sour. Too much Sweetness turns Sour. And the sense of satiation slips away, making way for envy, attachment etc.

In our second experiment with salt we saw another aspect making its way into this voyage of 'tasteful mentalities'. By pouring water into either lemon juice or sugar syrup we make it palatable. This means the Salt inherent in water is creating the appetite for more. The Siddhas have revealed Salt to be highly indulgent in nature, always spending and depleting, thereby making way for more. This is how one lands right back into the desire for sweetness in life.

I would like to add something more here. In the world today, there is one particular predominant attitude - 'Instant'. Most people thrive on sharp, instant lifestyles and experiences. They strongly adhere to and depend on all that is fast, instantaneous and quick acting; even in food and medicine - a highly result oriented attitude. Unfortunately, all this only agitates and further aggravates an individual, leaving him volatile and hot! The way of the *Pungent* in you! But, ironically, Man is looking for sweetness. He is constantly trudging down the roads of life, carrying with him the memory of contentment.

By now, Man is already consumed by the mechanical pattern of running after the memory of Sweet with intentions of grasping and

then watching it turn Sour, which brings him right back to the indulgent nature of trying once again through some other 'instant' ways. Lost in this, he suddenly meets with a rude shock, a life situation - a crisis which leaves him with a strong *Bitter* taste in his mouth. Life confronts him and stares him in the face! Man finds himself staring in the face of Truth, which he finds ever so Bitter, Bitter only because it demands from him a change, and this he does not like. Man cannot palate this truth so easily and according to the nature of Bitter, it doesn't leave so easily and lingers around.

Actually, this is a guiding light, a clear pointer, an indicator, but before he sees it Man first has to face his inability. If he digests the bitter truth it converges and brings him back to himself. Otherwise, it erupts as volcanic anger, a Pungent reaction to Bitter truth. And if he recoils from the undigested Truth, man falls into an extremely *Astringent* place. This Astringent quality or reaction may reflect as anti-social behaviour; an isolated and withdrawn attitude or mentality.

Notice closely: by making 'satisfaction' our yardstick of craving we deviate from our integrated feeling and externalise ourselves more and more. The hot tastes - sour, salt, pungent and their qualities make you relate with the external world; they draw you outwards.

On the other hand the constricting tastes work to bring you back: astringent, and bitter. For instance, if the diet of an individual has only astringent and bitter tastes, he would be unable to relate comfortably with the external world. He would be withdrawn and isolated. This is an imbalance.

This brings us to the importance of a *Centreline*; A balance between the Externalising tastes and the Converging ones a place and quality that relates with ones inner world just as well as with the world around - with a complete sense of contentment and grounding.

This is why the Siddhas call the heat governed tastes as 'Boga' - enjoyment or indulgence. They continually rope you in for more and more.



Here, we round up and explain all that has been spoken of right from the start of this chapter.

The Siddhas say: the body is made of food, which is made of six different tastes, each bearing distinctive expressions. Some are expansive i.e. move outwards and some are constrictive, i.e. move inwards. Mind identifies with the body (and therefore food) and through this to the world around. In this way the intake of external food connects him to the world around.

We have already introduced Food and Lifestyle as the most basic imperatives that govern Man's quality of existence. So, when Man eats a certain diet and pursues a certain lifestyle this is what his mind imbibes and it becomes his expression of life and livingness.

This brings us to the question, 'Where do diseases come from?' Do they fall from the skies? The Siddhas say, *'Diseases don't fall from the sky, we create them'*.

An Integrated Life can also be defined as a perfect blend of the six tastes of Nature; a coming together of expansion and convergence in a harmonious fashion that empowers one to abide with ones inner self as well as with the world around. But, when Man lives confined to 'Boga', he circles in persistent indulgence in search of contentment. By this confinement, he is actually depriving himself of the other vital qualities also needed for a balanced mind and body and healthy living.

If an individual revolves in half circles of Boga (pungent, salt, sour), his body-mind and lifestyle imbibe only these qualities. Eventually, the individual finds himself severely disconnected from his inner individuality and these feelings of disintegration gradually build towards an Integrity Crisis.

An over-emphasis in expansive qualities results in severe outward spending and depletion. Agitated and always wanting to acquire and possess, the individual displays a 'Utilitarian Mentality'. On the other hand, excessive convergence results in feelings of separation and isolation from the external dimension of existence. Either way, it implies our Ahamkara not to be in its required state of balance.

Life may continue in this mode but sooner or later, the body suffers from the lack or derangement and demands attention in that area. By now, Man's constant attention to the external is a habit. So, even when the body suffers and signals for help Man ignores it or doesn't even recognise it. The body is forced to live with a growing derangement.

We have already seen what we mean by an Integrity Crisis in the Tattwa chapter.

There are four Antha Karanas or inner instruments. They are Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (memory retainer) and Ahamkara (individuation or identification factor). All of these inner instruments are vital for the working of our Gyanendriyas (knowing senses) and Karmendriyas (working-senses).

Even though it seems to have four names, fundamentally it is only one inner instrument, called our mind or psyche. It is similar to a person having different names depending on his situation or relationship - such as father, son, boss, husband etc. Likewise, the

working of our psyche also takes on different names. When it is being analytical or doubtful it is the mind; when it is determined and synthesised or deliberate it is called as our intellect; when it recalls some information it is Chitta (memory); and when it identifies with each of its other works it gets its individuation.

For example:

I am going out. After I have left my house somewhere along the way a thought suddenly comes to me...

- whether I locked the door of the house or not - this signifies mind aspect.
- when I feel assured the door is locked it is the intellect aspect.
- when I suddenly think of my lover waiting for me in the restaurant it is the memory aspect.

All these are thoughts and pieces of information, and the source of these is external, outside. But, when I identify with each of these available information or process as...

...I doubt I locked the door I have identified with the mind aspect.

...I am sure I locked the door - it is identification with the intellect.

...I have to meet my love at the restaurant - is the identification with the memory aspect.

Most importantly, the Ahamkara or individuation that happens is subjective, an internal aspect! While all the other three have their source outside, the Ahamkara, the 'I', has an inner source.

Now we can think a little more about:

The everyday world we relate to has many dimensions and now because of the effect of post modernism everything is especially fast and chaotic.

Because of this our Manas, Buddhi and Memory that always have their source from the external have to process a lot of data and are always undergoing frequent and fast changes according to our surrounding social structure. We can ask, what's wrong? But, give a thought to our Ahamkara; our identifying aspect that subjectifies our identity with each of these processes is constantly fluctuating and changing. What do you think happens when our Ahamkara is unable to digest what it identifies with or longs to possess, under the influence of mass level conditioning?

It simply hangs, thereby impairing the body.

Many of our present day diseases are auto immune disorders; the right word being 'pseudo immune disorders'!

In this way, our human body continues to live with our gradually growing imbalances that express through the body as derangements of Pitta, Vatha or Kapha. These derangements unfortunately remain confined within the body, unattended and ignored due to the insensitive attitude Man holds towards his body. The derangements begin to collect.

A derangement confined within the body for a long period, whether of Pitta, Vatha or Kapha nature, begins to imbibe the Kapha nature. In other words, it begins to take 'form' and 'shape'. The Siddhas call this '*Megham*', which literally means '*Clouds that travel*'. The long-ignored accumulations now erupt in any part of the body and travel, just as clouds travel the open skies.

At some point in their travel they burst and cause a rain of diseases - what we term Chronic Disease. A chronic disease is something Man can no longer ignore and is forced to attend to. *Who is responsible for this disease?*

The Siddhas describe the nature of such diseases as '*hard to heal*', which makes complete sense as Man first depleted and then deprived the body of wholesome qualities by living confined to cravings for Boga tastes; leaving no immunity strength to protect the body. These sorts of diseases are common in today's day - Diabetes, Cancer, AIDS etc and the Siddhas declare them to be nothing other than an, '*Integrity Crisis*' - the clouds that cause rain.

Turning a deaf ear to the calls of our body, thinking we know better, we adopt habits and make choices under the pretext of wanting a 'better life', but in doing so what have we actually done?

We have denied ourselves wholesome qualities that Nature herself has already provided for, from Her immense love and compassion. Thinking we know better we set out to conquer the world but what did we actually end up destroying? Our platform of existence in this world - our Integrated Individuality - because the platform of an integrated individuality stands on the harmonious integration of all six tastes and not only on half circles of Boga.

With this we come back to conclude the vital role of the six tastes in upholding our Individuality. They are the deciding factors of how we integrate with the world within and the world without. And how did they come to be the decision makers? As the Siddhas say, '*Body is made of food and mind identifies with body and through it to the world*'. So, when our identification with our individuality is threatened it brings sorrow, and in its balanced or Satvic state it makes Man an integrated part of the whole Cosmos.



TAPPING THE ANCIENT SOLUTION

Under this title although we continue to speak of disease as a lapse in the integrated functioning and unravel its roots, this time we speak in reference to the seven tissues that make up our human body.

WHOLISTIC FUNCTIONING

A small instance highlighting the integrated functioning of the seven tissues of the body by way of a compensating process is given below. It describes clearly how one part of the human body when affected by imbalance naturally tries to balance itself by taking from another part - a compensating process.

Leucorrhoea is a disease common to women. We have already discussed Thathus, the seven fundamental tissues of the body. This disease first arises in the generative fluid - the seventh tissue of the body. The symptoms of Leucorrhoea are burning and itching in the woman's generative organ, accompanied by a white fluid discharge. The allopathic system commonly diagnoses this as an infection and prescribes a strong dose of antibiotics. But what happens when continued Leucorrhoea turns into a chronic disease? It affects the body on multi levels. The patient begins to suffer associative symptoms such as lower back pain, cracking sounds from the joints, giddiness and tiredness. The Siddha medicinal system elucidates chronic Leucorrhoea to affect the bone marrow tissue and then in turn the bones itself.

In a chronic case of Leucorrhoea, after the disease has exhausted and depleted the generative tissue by way of a chronic discharge, the disease doesn't cease there. The body intelligence proceeds to command the next level of tissue, the bone marrow tissue to be utilised next in place of the lack. This disease now re-establishes its roots and continues to spread within the body by melting the bone marrow tissue in order to go on with the vaginal discharge. From the bone marrow it moves and spreads itself to the bones itself.

Why bone marrow and bone tissues? Because in the sequential seven Thathus the bone marrow tissue is the tissue preceding the generative fluid tissue and the bone tissue precedes that.

A patient complains to an allopathic doctor of continual back pain and brittling of the bones. The doctor examines these symptoms as an isolated condition, entirely unaware of the deeper interconnectedness of the two conditions and prescribes according to his isolated diagnosis!

The ancient medicinal texts elucidate that unless and until Leucorrhoea is cured, a rejuvenation of the bone marrow tissue cannot take place and the symptoms continue.

SIDDHAS REMEDY FOR AIDS

The vast knowledge of the Ancient Siddha Healing System speaks by poetic references of indications and symptoms of a disease or the onset of a host of diseases afflicting a body, which we can closely co-relate to what we today know as AIDS.

Siddhars like Ramadevar (also known as Yakop), Agasthiyar, Thirumoolar and many others, in their great works have not only mentioned but described in detail the subjective causes, the symptoms, the associated diseases and amazingly enough the remedies and cures for these diseases. These diseases are greatly feared by us today for their tough resistance to treatment and cure, their multiple symptoms (syndrome), their infectious nature and their nature to spread through unsafe sex etc eventually leading to death.

AIDS is defined as an 'Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome'. It results from the breakdown of the immune system. A failure of the immune system is what paves the way for all kinds of opportunistic diseases and finally death.

Modern practitioners are still at loss when faced with this "incurable, deadly and greatly feared disease".

Let us first see WHAT is IMMUNITY within us?

The Siddhas give a deep and wholistic understanding of immunity. They declare it as the *binding inter-connected nature and the balanced function of the seven basic constituents*, (called as Sapta Thathu) within the body. This combined function establishes the nature of immunity within us. There is the popular maxim in the circle of Siddha healers that says, *Thathu kettal palamum kedum*'. It means, *'if the basic seven tissues are impaired the immunity also gets impaired'*.

In the Siddha Medicinal System the physical aspect of immunity is termed as '*Deha Vanmai*' and the subtle aspect of immunity as '*Amritha Nilai*'.

The Clouds That Gather To Cause Rain.....

A group of diseases caused by the fragmentation of the immunity within us have been revealed by the Siddhas under the classification of 'Megha Noi'.

In their poetic references the Siddhas describe Megha Noi as the '*Clouds that gather to cause the rain (Megham)*.' Not a few, but a large group of 21 vital deadly diseases are mentioned under this classification. The common disease diabetes is also one of them.

DIABETES

The root birth of Diabetes rises from excessive or habitual indulgences and frequent stimulation. It could be either, pleasurable, stressful or miserable situations that demand or stimulate us into further indulgence. Any sort of

prolonged obsessive indulgence leads the body to fall into various imbalances. The nature of this drastic imbalance affects the nature of the binding fluid in the fundamental seven constituents of the human body (Sapt Thathus). This is what is hard to cure. The Siddha system calls this disease as 'Neer Ellivu', literally meaning the dissipation of the fluid system.

Although, diabetes is mostly taken as a metabolic disorder the approach of the Siddha medicinal system concentrates on healing the impaired functioning of the liver and the associated Pitta dosham that suffer in relation to this disorder.

From my own experience I found saliva and its segregation also playing a significant role in a diabetic. The diet of a diabetic holds great importance of diet restrictions, such as avoiding sweets, rice, dairy products and refined flour foods etc.

I found two reasons behind this.

One reason being, foods that are soft don't need much chewing so are easily swallowed. They pass quickly into the stomach without it being really mixed with our saliva first. That means, the sugar level in these foods require a longer time to assimilate into the body, causing an imbalance in the hormonal levels. In the Siddha system this is known as Thathu imbalance - already known for its low curability.

The second reason is that after a diabetic consumes something sweet he experiences drying up of the saliva in the mouth. Whatever food he subsequently eats wouldn't find enough saliva to mix with, before entering into the digestive system.

The valuable role of saliva is highlighted here because when food is chewed well it mixes with the saliva and food is said to get half digested here itself, making it easy to become one with the body. Saliva behaves as the first sensor. It alarms and informs the brain about the kind of food that has entered, to enable it to segregate the appropriate enzymes and hormones to help digestion. Therefore it is most important for a diabetic to chew his food properly and avoid the system from carrying and holding onto excess sugar levels.

In the Siddha and the Ayurveda medicinal systems, 'Nellikai' (Amla fruit) and Vilvam (Bilva) are the main medicines used for diabetes as they enhance the production and secretion of saliva.

Modern day lifestyles, rush hours and fast moving daily routines are made up of quick meals and fast foods, gulped down in haste. These are open invitations for imbalance within the body and so it is no surprise that the number of diabetics is increasing day by day.

In the olden days it was a matter of pride to have diabetes! Why? Because, it afflicted only the rich people! Having a sugar assimilation problem indirectly helped impress others, indicating one was either rich or did not have to do any kind of labour work and thus provided them with false pride. Even if this might sound strange there is some truth behind it. When only the rich were expected to suffer diabetes, it pushes us to ponder the aspect of lifestyle. Yes, the rich not having any physical work frequently indulged in so-called pleasure stimulant activities, ranging between normal day to day life activities like food, sex, alcohol and work; whereas an Indian peasant would either drink rice water, eat left over rice and go into the fields for cultivating or harvesting crop. Most of the time his breakfast was this rice water or old rice, which we now categorise as a sugar increasing food. This of course stands true for modern day human situations. While a physical or poor man works hard and spends his energy constructively, the life of a rich person is spent indulging in highly stimulant activities in the name of life-enjoyment.

Today, whether rich or poor, most of us prefer to take life in a hippy sort of way, all under the mass hypnosis of looking at life in such a way. It is said that the effect of a prolonged deprivation of nutritious food has registered deep into Indian genes. Not only that, an early exposure to the opposite sex; engaging in multi relationships and spending idle time (watching television etc) are also leading reasons for the higher percentage of diabetics comparing to other countries.

Taking advantage, India applied Western technology in an extremely short period compared to other Western countries. In doing so it has also taken the influence of other dimensions of western life style and invited trouble. The genetic coding or the mental attitude of Indians is not really ready to digest the invasion of too many new outlooks and lifestyles and this reflects as disease in their physical as well as social structure.

In the olden days, the exogenous factors for disease were only natural calamities, but now, in addition to that there is more there are even man made ones such as eating pesticide food, junk foods, polluted environment and occupational diseases; the result being 'life-style disease'. This is the phrase used to describe the current pattern of disease of the 21st century.



We now speak of another of the 21 deadly diseases revealed by our Ancients. Interestingly, in the sacred texts, a particular Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is referred to by the name of “Vettai Megham”. The Siddhars describe it as the deadliest of all. The poetic composition found in the work “Theran Venba” of the Siddha Theraiyar gives a beautiful comparison to opportunistic infections.

The poem says:

*That when one is affected by 'Vettai Megham'
Diseases attack the body that is devoid of immunity
Like "Clouds that gather to cause the rain" (Megham),
Likewise the various kinds of infections take ground in the infected
individual to spread as numerous diseases.*

In common response most minds question the subjective factor and its balanced role in the affliction of disease. For instance we all get bitten by mosquitoes but only some get sick with malarial fever!! How does this happen? It is clear that the subjective aspect does play the most vital role.

Let us apply this question on AIDS!

We are aware that one of the major ways AIDS is known to be transmitted is through improper sexual acts. But what we do not know is why.

During sexual relations, both partners open up to each other. Referring to the psychological reflection of this we must understand that ones inner environment is most agitated, vulnerable and exposed at this time.

We have emphasized the word "improper sexual acts", which indicates certain aspects like perversion and loosening ones inherent balance during the sexual act. Indulging in similar aspects of 'improperness' leaves open ground for the perversion to mingle with ones agitated vulnerability. Subsequently, this gives birth to a severe hormonal imbalance, nervous agitation and most importantly the generation of a lot of heat within the body. This heat consumes and dries up the existent Ojas in the body. As soon as Ojas depletion occurs, the body naturally tries to replenish it by energetically opening up to receive more.

Ojas is the resultant unifying factor from the function of the 7 basic constituents that express themselves as "Rasa" within the human psyche. A depletion of the Ojas happening during an uncontrolled, agitated and improper sexual act indirectly stimulates a craving, urging one to invite and unify with the contaminated prana (deranged Vatha), toxic heat (deranged Pitta), bad fluids (deranged Kapha) segregated in the generative organ of the afflicted partner. This is how the affliction can get transmitted and received from one to another.

But what is the cause of Aids?

Contaminated prana (deranged Vatha), toxic heat (deranged Pitta), bad fluids (deranged Kapha) remaining stagnant and clustered over a long period of time within the body starts to fragment the balancing nature of immunity and eventually leads to the complete breakdown of the immune system. This is what invites deadly diseases to flourish as there is nothing to fight back. Now we can clearly see how the earlier verse speaks of the clustering of the 3 saturated black clouds of Bad Prana, Bad Kapha and Bad Pitta coming together

to bring a rain of the “depletion of immunity”. (the word 'Bad' indicates severe imbalance).

The Siddhar Ramadevar depicts Vettai Megham in his poetic verse as follows:

“Patta Maram Pollakuum Vettai Megham”

(‘Patta Maram’ refers to a withered, rotting tree.)

This poetic reference says that the body affected by the disease ‘Vettai Megham’ will slowly lose its ‘*Amritha Nillai State*’ (Immunity) and finally become like a withering, rotting tree.

The co-relation between present day AIDS and Vettai Megham and the associated symptoms mentioned in Siddha Agasthiyar’s “Vaidhiya Kaviyam” (the great work of medicine) can be established after reading the verses.

*“Matharall Vantha Vettai Van Megham
Chenni Vali Odhu Suram Vizhi Noi
Odungkaan Baethiodu Makkattam
Seethamaru Maa Mooli Yam Vellai
Chem Parathai Mega Vettai
Theera-Diramiamodu Vampirathai
Vellai Vazhuvazhu
Thutta Vidam Paandu Veppu
Aripakki Kon Kudal Noi
Ketta Kandamaalai
Mega Vettai Weer Churukku
Veera Thridotam Punvenga
Surathagam Veppam Vitozhiyam...”*

*“...Daasi Veedu Chendrarathut Halaikku
Chemmayai Tharugaue Cherupadi Than
Athawal Kaasamilagum, Kabum Athuvidum...”*

Ancient Text Siddha Terminology	Modern Day Terms
Chenni Vali	Pain in Spinal area.This may be compared to Tubercular spine disease
Odhu Suram	Recurrent Fever
Vizhi Noi	Eye disease (maybe EBV viral infection which is common in AIDS)
Bedhi	Recurrent diarrhoea

Seetham	Dysentery
Thira abirumiyam	Leucorrhoea discharge
Vellai	Gonorrhoea
Paandu	Severe anaemia
Soolai Vetham	Neuritis
Kuttam	Dermatological Infections
Aripakki	Herpetic lesions
Konkudal Noi	Gastric intestinal disorders
Keta Kandamaalai	Nodular Growths in cervical lymph nodes
Kiranthi	Syphilitic adenitis
Megha Suram	Leucorrhoeal or Syphilitic fever
Neer Churukku	Urinary Micturition

The affected seven Thathus start erupting different diseases from every Thathu level:

- Fevers are caused due to the first Thathu - Rasa Thathu getting affected.
- Skin rashes, anaemia, herpes and itching are caused from the next, Raktha Thathu.
- The third Thathu, Mamsa brings up disorders like weight loss, deterioration in muscles etc.
- The fourth Thathu is Medha, which causes a lot of heat and excessive sweating, dryness in the mouth, stomatitis.
- Asthi, the fifth one causes intense body aches, joint pain, loss of hair, and brittling of the nails.
- The sixth Thathu Majjai causes neurological complications, disorientation and improper co-ordination between the command signals of the brain and the body's response to it.
- And the last Thathu, the Shukra Thathu causes insomnia and memory loss etc which finally leads into a state of semi consciousness and then unconsciousness.
- Lastly, a complete depletion and deterioration of all the seven Thathus leads to death.

The ancient verses even discuss those who contract “Vettai Megham” through “Daasi’s” (commercial sex workers of those days). They, at first are said to suffer continuous cough, combined with the spitting of phlegm via short coughs called “Kasam” (Pulmonary tuberculosis). Comparatively, in our present day, the earliest symptoms of HIV infection are marked by pulmonary tuberculosis seen typically in tropical weather as claimed by modern practitioners.

It is not hard to believe that ‘Vettai Megham’ as told by the Siddhars in their texts is the same or an equivalent of the present day condition we call AIDS.

THE ANCIENT APPROACH

After the knowledge of these various fatal diseases referred to in many Siddha texts under the traditional Guru Kula system, Native Siddha doctors in Tamil Nadu started working and implementing various therapies and remedies on individuals with remarkable success..

There is a distinct difference in today’s modern approach and in the cures and remedies revealed by the ancient Siddhas - not only in the treatment but also in the theory.

First and foremost all formulations under Siddha medicine are designed in a highly specialised manner. They not only affect the specific disorders erupting from this condition but aim at having a totally rejuvenating effect on the entire body Thathus (Constituents).

This approach is based on the Three Doshams Concept. (Mukuttram-in Tamil)

To put it more clearly - modern day theory pinpoints its attention on the disease or the infection caused by the AIDS virus. This line of treatment is what is called an anti viral treatment - supported by a symptomatic treatment. But the Siddha’s theory doesn’t limit its attention to the disease and instead dives to the root level to begin its work of eradicating the fundamental causative factors involved.

What does the word medicine mean to a Siddha?

The interesting theory of ‘REFUSING THE DISEASE’ as revealed by Siddha Thirumoolar stands unique to the Siddha Medicinal System.

*“Maruppthu Udal Noi Marundhuenalakum
Maruppthu Ula Noi Marundu Enalakum
Maruppthu Ini Noi Varathiruppa
Maruppthu Savai Marundu Enalakum”*

*“Refusing The Disease Of The Body
Refusing The Disease Of Mind (Psyche)
Refusing Further As A Prevention
Refusing Death Itself Ensures Real Medicine”*

So speak the sacred teachings of this unique and divine medicinal system that...

“Medicine is that which ensures and regenerates a balance in the physical and psychological dimensions leading to preventive as well as constructive and last but not the least the conquest of death par excellence.”

To date this divine system continues to offer remedies and cures for these types of extreme diseases and thus continues to hold true the eternal theory of this age-old system.

A wise and competent Native Siddha Healer approaches the AIDS disease corresponding to the degree of affliction.

For instance, a Native Healer can prevent further deterioration of health and gradually eradicate this entire syndrome from the person's constitution in case he has only been recently afflicted by this disease.

But in case of a “full blown” affliction of AIDS, the Siddha system can aim at considerably reducing the suffering of the individual and offering longevity.

Some native Siddha healers cure the diseases classified under “Megha Noi” by using Herbal Medicines only. Others cure the disease by giving a compound formulation after considering its synergistic action.

Some basic medicinal approaches prescribed for AIDS may be divided as follows:

Purely Herbal preparations,
Herbo-mineral preparations,
Herbo mercuric preparations,
Herbo mercurial-mineral preparations and
higher Kaya Kalpa rejuvenative treatment etc.,

The formulation 'Kala Bairava Ennai' (main ingredient being purified mercury), revealed by Siddha Sage Agasthiyar, works well for skin related diseases.

The formulation 'Sengottai Rasayanam' (main ingredient being purified Semiearpus Anacardium), revealed by Siddha Bogar, works great as an antibiotic and can be incorporated for cancer treatments also.

The formulation 'Markandeya Melugu' (both metallic and rare herbs formulations), received from my Siddha Master, cures all kinds of tuberculosis, including Insipidus tuberculosis.

There are several other such successful formulations used by native Siddha Healers in Tamil Nadu. Now-a-days Siddha Physicians coming from the academic area have been carrying out different clinical researches with intentions to prove that Siddha medicine offers hope for the cure of many chronic diseases and they have been successful in doing so in many cases. Moreover, the Tamil Nadu Government has recently established a Research Centre for the Siddha Medicinal System and supports it in a constructive way.

The secret of success behind Siddha's remedial medicines is that it increases the bio-availability through the cells of the body. The Pharmacodynamics (the working nature of Siddha medicine after intake) of this system stands completely apart from other prevalent systems.

The Siddha system declares that there is not one single medicine for AIDS and it varies depending on the afflicted person's constitution (Prakrithi), the nature of the disease (the Prakrithi of the disease) and the symptoms of associated diseases in the body.

Lastly, we must know that healing does not depend only upon the remedial medicines, but also on the competency and dedication of the Siddha Healer.

KAYA KALPA

Human existence has to pave its way through a maze of intermingling influences; all of which are variables of Nature in an ever-changing momentum. The five natural elements, as rising incarnations get bifurcated into the Exogenous and Endogenous. We have already met with the endogenous ones - The three doshams, the seven Thathus and the Malas.

The exogenous ones are the doshams around us, such as rhythmically changing seasons and the daily rhythms. Man lives his entire lifetime amidst the macro as well as microcosmic patterning.

Each human body functions by its inter-connectedness and inter-dependence between both the exogenous and endogenous factors. From the moment a human body enters into Existence the three doshams are always governing its functioning and the seven Thathus are continuously nourishing the body. The depleted tissues of the body are being replenished, formed and nourished by the intake of food etc. And from the proper and balanced functioning between the doshams and the Thathus emerges a Quintessence - the Siddhas call Amritha. This water element is a collective quintessence and acts as the immunity factor or shield for the body. But let us not forget that all these factors are always changing under the influence of larger cosmic factors.

Assuming these variables of Nature to be working in idyllic harmony, the Siddhas point to yet another vital variable within the human organism - the Fire Element - The conversion catalysts in the seven tissues of the body - the

Sapta Thathu agnis. They say that unless and until these agnis don't perform their best the circle is not complete. The intensity in the fire of these seven agnis, also determines the strength of the immunity factor - Amritha.

The Fire, by its inherent nature, cooks the water element within the human organism and this releases Vapour; the Siddhas call it Vaasi - the life giving Prana or force. Human existence is based on this core process of combustion.

But, something more reveals at this stage. The Siddhas declare the three doshams within our body to be descendants or evolutes of the three primordial essences of Existence - Air, Fire and Water. This revelation is a vital indicator declaring the existence of the primordial essences to be prior to the birth of the three doshams within the human organism. This supports their pronouncement of the human body to be a micro cosmos - a miniature replica of the larger cosmos.

Therefore, human life cannot continue its existence fuelled only by the quintessence emerging from the balanced governance of the doshams and the nourishment of the Thathus. Human existence essentially depends on the three primordial essences within this micro cosmos. The balanced function of doshams along with well-formed Thathus is actually the one responsible for replenishing the primordial reservoirs of Life.

As demanded by Life our human lifestyle involves activity and we are always drinking from these reservoirs in order to accomplish this. Considering the demanding lifestyle conditions of today's post modern world and food habits we are drinking more and replenishing less; evidence of this being fast reducing life spans. Of course, ill health, sickness and chronic diseases further deplete these life-giving reservoirs.

Foreseeing such dire circumstances the Siddhas divulged the therapeutic dimension of Kaya Kalpa Therapy. This dimension involves a rejuvenation of the Primal fire within the body and the revitalisation of all the seven tissues of the body. This nature of therapy encourages a greater lifespan and enables an efficient nature of living. The Siddhas advise this valuable nature of rejuvenating therapy to be made available for those suffering from chronic or near fatal illnesses. It is a highly effective manner of rejuvenating the subtle most essentials responsible for human existence.

Ill health is the result of an imbalance in the core functioning of the body. These three primordial essences Air, Fire and Earth are open to several external factors such as food, seasonal changes, daily changes, lifestyle demands etc. Even though these affect the body in a supportive way, they can also turn into causal factors and field invitations for imbalance and disease as they are the doorways between the inner and outer world. As long as we use these doorways to relate to the world within and without the possibility of being affected by disease is inevitable.

Higher Yogic practices point to a path that transcends these causative conditions and accomplishes Siddhahood - it shows the way to the Immortal Masters. This Kaya Kalpa Yoga stands unique to the age-old Siddha Tradition.

The path involves rigorous practices. It is stretched over a long duration as the underlying principle first involves the process of de-conditioning. In other words, the avenues and doorways one ordinarily uses are eliminated one by one. The process of elimination is gradual. Starting with basic changes and alterations, gradually ones entire diet and way of life are completely altered and then eliminated. In other words the doorways that hold connectivity to the world around are made invalid. This urges the body to function in its true nature - as a micro cosmos - entirely self sufficient in itself.

All energy-spending activities are gradually brought to their minimal. Almost no energy is spent. What would have been spent now gets redirected to remain within the human body. The saved energy or life force is then used to nourish the inner world and the reservoirs are continually replenished with minimalist depletion. Such replenishment enhances the core functionality multifold.

This results in an, 'involutionary' transformation. All the while, human existence functions and is sustained based on an evolutionary pattern but this time the journey is reverted. Here begins the journey of involution - and a series of transformations begin to take place. The temporal meets its end in Existence. And since the conservation aspect is enhanced multifold, rejuvenation takes place. It brings the birth of something new - the Internal Rebirth.

THE INTERNAL REBIRTH

This rebirth takes place on an entirely different platform than ordinarily known. Air with Fire gives birth to Vaasi, the primordial life Prana, and when this Primordial Prana is conserved within the body, it results in the internal conception. The foetus is nourished to an embryo and so on until it nourishes itself to a complete rebirth. This new life functions on an entirely different core platform of core functionality.

What happens is that the conserved life force gradually transmutes the Primal elements of Air, Fire and Water to their primordial essences of before their evolution began.

So, Space, otherwise known for its quality of non-resistance involutes to its primordial essence of 'no change'.

Air, known by its quality of mobility, now reverts to its primordial essence of 'expanded-ness'.

Fire, known for its quality of combustion, now reverts to its primordial essence of 'Light'.

Water, known for its fluidity, now reverts to a nourishing essence of life giver.

Earth, known for its solidity, reverts to its 'unhindered' form.

Each of the elements now exists in their primordial essences - exhibiting all qualities in their complete potential but devoid of any spending or depletion.

A new life is pursued on this platform; a life beyond conditions, change and limitations - the life of the Immortal One.

KAYA KALPA - THE HEALING DIMENSION

Disease has been an ever-present menace to man right from ancient times. Modern ailments like diabetes, HIV, heart and vascular diseases were threats to the average man even in ancient civilizations! Even then in those distant eras the scourge of disease was fought by what modern historians call 'a competent medical faculty'. Amazingly, the most modern drugs, anaesthetics, complicated surgical procedures even the vaunted antibiotic were used by our Ancients in the never ending war against ill health. Rather than preparing and using them in a static way of organ-wise application they use it functionality wise, in a wholistic way. The Siddha system of medicinal treatments is designed to return the abnormal forces haunting as disease to harmonious balance. It focuses on humans rather than symptoms. As each individual has his own particular balance of these three forces, called Prakrithi or Constitution, the Siddha system of medicinal treatments also remains specific to every individual and to every kind of functional imbalance.

The Siddha system of medicine has an extensive herbal and mineral industry including what is probably the greatest variety of herbal and pharmaceutical preparations in the world. These include herbal decoctions (kudineer), medicated powders (choornam), herbal pastes (lehyams), essences (sathu), pills (kuliga), medicated herbal oils (ennai) aromatic oils (thailams), jellies (kulambu), waxes (melugu), tablets (mathirai), incinerated basmas, chendhurams, balsam (kalimbu), powders for external application (patru), higher metallic preparations (kilangu, kalpam, karuppu), distilled medicated drops (dheenner) etc.

Siddha treatments include many different therapeutic methodologies:

Medicated emesis, medicated purgation, medicated enema, nasal

medication and collyrium for eyes, oil massage, mud therapy, moxibusion etc are the procedures used for purification and for the removal of accumulated toxins and other waste materials from the body.

Siddha Agasthiyar describes many complicated Kalpa procedures in his precious work, 'Antharanga Theeksa Vidhi', which is all about Native Siddha Kaya Kalpa techniques. These may be divided in two principle types:

Reduction and Rejuvenation

Reduction

The method of Reduction can be further divided into Palliation and Purification.

Palliation:

Palliation is the gradual reduction of the aggravated doshams at their respective sites as a means of curing disease or decreasing its symptoms. Disease causing doshams when eliminated by Purification therapy do not recur whereas chances of recurrence are still possible when treated under Palliation therapy. But as the Palliative treatment relieves the symptoms for the time being it is the most widely used type of treatment in day- to-day's practice.

Palliation consists of seven types of treatment:

- Withholding hunger or thirst or fasting;
- Various types of exercise;
- Exposure to sun or sun bathing;
- Exposure to fresh air or wind;
- Taking herbs which increase digestive power
- Taking herbs which destroy accumulated toxins.

All of these are supportive therapies used prior to or after Purification. When these are done prior to Kaya Kalpa procedures they prepare both, the bodily tissues and the mind for the exhaustive elimination therapies to come. All Palliative treatments can be used independently but Purification cannot be done without prior Palliative treatment.

Purification:

In radical Purification, the aggravated doshams (the causative factor for disease) is removed from the body.

As we saw earlier in the Hallmark of Siddha Medicine, the Siddhas found each medicine can be used for different diseases only by changing the carrier (the Anupanam). Yet another unique feature of Siddha medicine is the Purgative medicine. It is not merely meant for cleansing the stomach but also acts as a curative medicine for each disease by its purgative and purification actions.

These are the three traditional Siddha preparations that are used by both, Native Siddha Healers as well as academic Siddha physicians in Tamil Nadu.

Vedanta Melugu:

Interestingly, like its name 'Vedanta' it has the unique spiritual aspect of 'neti, neti' (not this, not this). This is, a cleansing medicine that

works best in the de-identifying process of the disease identified with the body.

Major Ingredients:

Sublimated mercury, yellow orpiment, red arsenic, borax, rock salt, terminalia chebula, black cumin seeds, long pepper, asafoetida, purified croton seeds etc (all purified).

Used for...

- All kinds of poisons betel leaf juice
- Nocturnal emission due to excess body heat (pitta) infusion of Terminalia chebula
- Persistent cough powder of Terminalia chebula
- Bleeding piles, haemorrhoids cow's ghee
- Vatha disorders coconut milk (juice of coconut pulp)
- Gastritis Oil
- Body pain and rheumatism Vitex negundo juice
- Fever ginger juice
- Urinary calculi, kidney problems tender coconut water
- Anaemia cows milk etc.

Agasthiyar Kulambu:

This preparation is called after Sage Agasthiyar as it may have been revealed by Him.

Major ingredients:

Rock salt, asafoetida, mustard seeds, borax, long pepper, aconite root, red arsenic, mercury, yellow orpiment, inner parts of jatropa curcas, croton seeds etc (all purified).

Used for...

- Septic ulcers and skin diseases - juice of caltrophis gijandica
- Urinary calculi, venereal ulcers and syphilitic abscess clerodendran inerme juice
- Bleeding piles - cow's ghee
- Fever - Dry ginger etc.

Kausikar Kulambu:

This preparation has been revealed by Sage Viswamitra. This single medicine can cure more than 430 diseases by combining and changing the different carriers (56), which have been accepted by the Indian Medicinal Council of research in this way.

Major ingredients:

Terminalia chebula, mustard seeds, rock salt, asafoetida, borax, mercury, red arsenic, cumin seeds, orpiment, picorrhiza kurroa, aconite root, croton seeds, daemia extensa juice, coconut milk, palmyra jaggery etc... (all purified)

Used for...

Fevers with warm water

Easinophelia, cough Terminalia chebula infusion, juice of calotropis gigantea

Shivering fever decoction of dry ginger

Throat cancer Solanum tribolatum juice

Vomiting and stomach ulcer Cassia tora juice

Asthma - Aibizzia amara juice

Stomach pain - castor ghee

Gastritis centella asiatica juice

Ulcerative colitis oxalis corniculata juice

Intestine cancer castor oil with breast milk

Phlegmatic diseases adatoda vasika, Alipinia chinensis butter

Abscess butter milk

Madness due to excess pitta juice of palam pasi with buttermilk

Orchitis - goat's milk

Leprosy cow's milk, ghee and sugar

Haemorrhoid breast milk with butter

Dysentery - cow's ghee

Jaundice and oedema castor oil

Ascites and dropsy - urine of goat

Anaemia thriphala (terminalia chebula, phyllanthus emblica, terminalia bellerica)

Spasms and all kinds' vatha disorders including paralysis

clerodendrum phlomides juice

Skin diseases and poisonous bites caltrophis gijandica juice. etc...

As the doshams and the tissues (Thathus) are related to each other these discharge procedures affect the tissues indirectly due to the strong elimination of the related humors.

For example, the pronounced elimination of Kapha by herb-induced emesis causes an effect on the nutrient tissue fluid pool containing water and electrolytes, plasma, muscle and fat.

A large elimination of Pitta by selective purgation similarly causes an indirect effect on the total colouring material in the body or blood.

Basti or medicated enema is somewhat different, as it is meant to nullify excess Vatha. Basti contains warm oleating substances. During its long contact with the membrane of the large intestine it separates layers of faecal matter and thus enhances better absorption, which is responsible for ultimate nourishment of all tissues. Nasal medication cleanses the sinus and opens the cranial nerves, enhancing the bio-circulation all over the brain, thereby improving the functions of sense organs.

By day and night and during digestion the doshams appear in the hollow organs of the trunk (Asayams) from the circulatory channels (mandalas). This occurs in different stages of digestion. Kapha appears in the chest and upper abdomen, Pitta in the middle and Vatha in the lower abdomen. The centripetal movement or pull of the doshams towards the gastro intestinal tract is its natural course.

The body naturally tries to throw away unwanted substances through gastro intestinal secretions. This natural process of the appearance of the biological humors in certain parts of the gastro intestinal tract is enhanced by, Kaya Kalpa. Thus, excess bio-humors are removed from the body.

In pathological conditions, the normal rhythm of the bio-regulating forces gets disturbed. This means that the vitiated doshams go to the solid tissues in circulatory channels or into the head and neck portions and do not come back or spread evenly. In these channels they start pathogenesis and form various diseases. Excessive exercise, extreme climatic atmosphere, too much spicy food and erratic behaviour, all aggravate the accumulation process of the already pushed doshams to the channels and cause disease.

Physical rest, avoiding exciting stimuli and relaxing the mind are pointers or recovery aids for moving the doshams back towards the gastro intestinal tract. For this, massage and sudation therapies are of help. If, after the elimination procedures the vitiated doshams get removed from the body, the recurrence of the disease can be prevented.

The Siddhas Kaya Kalpa system recommends dark room therapy and underground living in cases of fatal disease as well as yogic alchemical procedures in order to avoid external stimuli and continuous sensory inputs.

As the aggravated doshams are removed by elimination, it leads to the purification of the body and the capacity of the agnis increases; all the sense organs start working with vigour and after a certain time strength increases, old age ailments are prevented and diseases cured.

FOOD AS MEDICINE

*“Andam Surungil Atharkorazhivillai”
Bindam Surungil Pranan Nilaiperum
Undi Surungil Upayam Palauval
Kandang Karuthu Kapaliymame”*

*“If the universe were to reduce itself, it is immaterial
But if the body, is reduced, (made lighter) life would
become (is) permanent
If food, is eaten sparingly, much goodness/ auspiciousness
would flow
Then you verily become the Lord with the 'dark-hued throat”*

Thirumoolar's Thirumanthiram, Verse 735

Here Undi is food; the essence of the verse is that the less one eats, the healthier one remains. A moderate diet ensures strong benefit and leads to the prolongation of life by reducing excessive toxins in the body. Here in Tamil Nadu there is a proverb: “Langanam parama ausatham”, which means “Fasting is divine (or supreme) medicine.” (Langanam-’fasting’; parama-’supreme’ or ’divine’ ausatham-’medicine’)

In the work Thirukkural, the Tamil classic written more than 3000 years ago, Siddha Sage Thiruvalluvar devotes ten stanzas to restrictions in diet to promote physical stamina and mental equilibrium (vide MARUNDU Chapter 95, stanzas 941-950)

A few of these have been translated below for one to contemplate and imbibe these nourishing principles in their lives.

The learned physician says:

Excessive or deficient food upsets the three humors in the body and causes disease.

There shall be no need for medicine if one eats only when he feels hunger.

When one feels very hungry let there be moderate eating; it leads to a longer life.

After what is eaten earlier has been fully digested, when one once again feels hunger, one should eat only wholesome food that does not upset the evenness of the three humors.

No disease attacks the person who eats in moderation according to the laws of health; eat therefore, such kinds of food as suited to the three humors of ones body.

Perpetual enjoyment of health exists in one who is moderate in eating; perpetual trouble of illness dwells in one who eats like a beast.

There is no limit to sickness in a man, who immoderately eats incompatible food paying no attention to time and calorific value factors, etc.

For good health of the body and mind one should follow the core-principles of diet formulated by Siddha Thiruvalluvar in the world famous Thirukkural’ book, in the chapter entitled ‘Marundu’ medicine. Man does not survive on what he eats, but rather on what he digests. The body is nourished by nutrient fluid and the quality of this nutrient fluid depends upon the quality of ones diet principles.

Below is a list of food combinations that the Siddhas emphasize not to be eaten together. They classified these combinations in food, herbs and metals as “Chathru” (unfriendly), “Mithru” (friendly). They explain: if an unfriendly food combination is taken it may create abdominal pain, gastritis, skin disorders, constipation, diarrhoea, urinary retention, lethargy, sleep disorders, depression and anxiety, as different classes of food require different digestive enzymes.

Food Item	Chathru – Incompatible or Unfriendly
Honey	Ghee (Equal proportion should not be taken)
Mangoes	With yoghurt, cheese and cucumbers
Tomatoes	Milk, Melons
Lemons	With yoghurt, milk, tomatoes
Radish	Milk, Bananas
Milk	Fish, Curd, Meat and Sour fruits
Chillies	Yoghurt
Yoghurt	Milk, Melon, Meat & Fish, Hot drinks, Sour fruits, Mangoes.
Corn	Bananas, Dates
Potatoes	Yoghurt, Cucumbers
Egg plant	Yoghurt
Honey	With hot drinks

- Also,
- One should not bathe or indulge in sex for two hours after eating food, until the digestive fire digests the food.

- Cold drinks should not be taken immediately after taking hot drinks.
- Tender coconut water should not be taken on an empty stomach at morning time.
- Drumstick leaves should not be taken at night.

A diet planner in the Siddha system contains its own Do's and Don'ts and Whys and Wherefores of Diet. Keeping this information in mind one can try and tailor his or her diet to keep one's health. Also fasting to reduce body weight can anger the Vatha and Pitta doshams without affecting the Kapha dosham. And sleeping on a full stomach tends to increase the Kapha dosham.



The Siddha system of medicine refines the process of eating a meal to being Prakrithi friendly. It provides specific guidelines as a diet-process for the preparation and eating of a meal. The few important components are:

An individual of Vatha prakrithi should avoid dry and light foods and eat more lubricating substances like oil, sweet, sour and salty items.

If a person is of Pitta Prakrithi he should prefer cold items which have sweet, bitter and astringent tastes.

A Kapha prakrithi should avoid sweet taste and prefer hot, spicy foods. As we saw earlier, each Prakirithi should maintain compatibility with its own set of tastes in food as well as with the daily and seasonal rhythm.

The total quantity, as well as the individual quantity of dietary constituents is important. The latter is dependent on the Prakrithi of a person.

Thus, a person with Pitta prakrithi needs to eat more Kapha increasing items such as rice and wheat.

While a person of Kapha Prakrithi needs more vegetables.

While oil quietens Vatha and ghee counters the anti-kinetic nature, cumin or mustard seeds contribute to the bitter taste to increase Vatha.

The states of our agni is also important in our diet planner. The correct hours for breakfast, lunch and dinner are based on the maximal functioning of the agni's and the proper digestion of food. The rhythms of seasons are also to be considered. The ideal foods for Tamil meals should be considered in this way.

Each food item is eaten in a particular order and way to quieten down and balance the three doshams.

When one is very hungry, the Vatha dosha is upset and causes hunger contractions. Eating rice and dal with ghee increases the Kapha and soothes the Vatha.

The ghee and a course of vegetables and curry will increase Pitta. This helps in digestion.

The final round usually contains soothing buttermilk, which reduces Pitta.

This may increase Vatha, to counter which betel leaf and supari, which are astringent in taste. They are recommended to conclude the meal and enhance a good digestive effect in the stomach.

Siddha Theraiyar quotes some principles as life regimen in his work “Noy-Anuka Vithi”

The verses are as:

*“Take food only twice
Sleep only at night
Have sexual intercourse only once in a month
Drink water only between meals
Don’t eat bulbous root vegetables except Karunai kilangu. Don’t eat
any unripe fruit except tender plantain
Take a short walk after a delicious meal
What then, has death to do with us?”*

*“Once in six months, take an emetic
Once in four months, clean your stomach by purgative
Once in a month and a half, have nasal cleansing
Twice in a fortnight, have the head shaved
Once every fourth day, anoint our selves with oil bath
Once every third day, apply collyrium to the eyes
Never smell perfumes or flowers around midnight time.
What then, has death to do with us?”*



APPROPRIATE FOOD FOR 3 TYPES OF CONSTITUTIONS

- Y - Indicates the Food consumable by that specific type of constitution without any adverse effects.
- N - Indicates it is unadvisable for that type of constitution to intake that specific food.

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
GRAINS			
Wheat	YES	YES	NO
Rice-raw	N	N	Y
Rice-boiled	Y	N	Y
Rice-old	N	Y	N
Millet	Y	Y	Y
Maize	N	Y	N
Corn	N	N	Y
Barley	N	N	Y

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
CEREALS			
Black Gram	Y	N	N
Green Gram	Y	Y	Y
Red Gram	N	N	Y
Horse Gram	N	N	Y
Chick Pea	N	N	Y
Peanut	N	N	Y
Bengal Gram	N	Y	Y
Pigeon Pea	N	Y	Y
Sesame	Y	Y	Y
Green Beans	Y	N	N
Soya Beans	N	Y	N
Dry Oats	Y	N	N
Brazil Nuts	Y	N	N
Almonds	Y	N	N
Walnuts	Y	N	N
Hazelnuts	Y	N	N
Lentils	Y	N	N
Cashews	Y	N	N
Whole Oats	N	Y	N
Flax seeds	N	N	Y
Rock Salt	Y	N	N

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
VEGETABLES			
Drumstick	N	Y	Y
Bottle Gourd	Y	Y	Y
Radish	Y	N	N
Onion	Y	N	N
Brinjal	Y	N	N
Grey Gourd	Y	N	Y
Tapioca	Y	N	N
Ribbed Gourd	N	Y	Y
Bitter Gourd	N	Y	Y
Carrot	Y	N	Y
Yellow Pumpkin	Y	N	N
Lady Finger	N	Y	N
Yam	N	Y	N
Beet Root	Y	N	N
Cabbage	N	Y	N
Ash Gourd	Y	Y	N
Potato	N	Y	N
Cucumber	N	Y	Y
Tomato	N	N	Y
Snake Gourd	Y	Y	N
Spinach	N	Y	N
Cauliflower	N	Y	Y
Mushroom	N	Y	N
Garlic	Y	N	Y
Lettuce	Y	N	Y
Mushrooms	N	Y	N
White Pumpkin	Y	N	N
Zucchini	N	Y	N
Celery	N	N	Y
Parsley	N	Y	N
Broccoli	N	Y	Y

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
VEGETABLES			
Kohlrabi	Y	N	N
Sweet Potato	Y	N	N
Maca	Y	N	N
Turnip	Y	N	N
Horse Radish	N	N	Y
Kidney Beans	Y	N	N
Chick Peas	N	Y	N
Green Peas	Y	Y	N
Mung Beans	N	Y	N

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
SPICES			
Ginger Dry	Y	N	Y
Cardamom	N	N	Y
Pepper	Y	N	Y
Red Chilly	N	N	Y
Long Pepper	Y	Y	Y
Green Chilly-fresh	Little	N	Y
Mustard	Y	N	Y
Coriander	Y	Y	Y
Fenugreek	Y	N	Y
Cumin	Y	N	Y
Clove	N	Y	Y
Asafoetida	Y	N	Y
Cinnamon	Y	N	Y

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
FRUITS			
Mango-raw	N	N	Y
Gooseberry	Y	Y	Y
Mango-ripe	Y	Y	N
Cherry Plum	Y	N	N
Papaya	Y	N	N
Lemon	Y	N	Y
Orange	Y	N	N
Pomegranate	Y	Y	Y
Pineapple	Y	N	Y
Guava	Y	N	N
Apple	Y	Y	N
Jack Fruit	N	Y	N
Banana	Y	Y	N
Dates	Y	Y	N
Grapes	Y	Y	Y
Cashew	Y	N	Y
Coconut	Y	N	N
Custard Apple	Y	Y	N
Strawberry	Y	N	N
Pears	N	Y	N
Apricot	Y	N	N
Avocado	Y	Y	N
Cherries	N	N	Y
Water Melon	N	Y	N
Grape Fruit	Y	N	N
Fresh Figs	N	Y	N

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
FRUITS			
Dry Figs	N	N	Y
Raisins	N	Y	Y
Peaches	Y	N	N
Papaya	Y	Y	K
Plums	N	Y	N
Prunes	Y	Y	N
Black Berries	Y	N	N
Blue Berries	Y	N	N
Cranberries	Y	N	N
Goose Berries	N	N	Y
Goji Berries	N	N	Y
Strawberries	N	N	Y
Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
OILS			
Sesame	Y	Y	Y
Coconut	Y	N	N
Mustard	Y	N	Y
Sunflower	N	N	Y
Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
MILK & MILK PRODUCTS			
Cow's Milk	Y	Y	Y
Ghee	Y	Y	N
Buffalo's Milk	Y	Y	N
Cream	Y	Y	N
Goat's Milk	N	N	N
Cheese	Y	N	N
Butter	Y	Y	N
Curd	Y	N	N

Foods	Vatha	Pitta	Kapha
NON-VEG FOOD			
Sea food	Y	N	N
Mutton	Y	Y	Y
Beef	Y	N	N
Chicken	Y	N	Y
Pork	Y	Y	N
Turkey	Y	Y	N
Dry Meat/Fish	N	N	N
Egg	Y	N	N
Deer Meat	Y	Y	Y
Fowl	Y	N	N
	❧		

VARMA - THE VITAL SPOTS THAT CAN HARM OR HEAL

*"When the Stem of a flower gets slightly deviated,
The florescence doesn't diminish
When the sugarcane stalk is deviated,
The sweetness flows.
When an iron rod is bent,
It controls even an elephant,
But, when a nerve gets bent, what can be done?"*

This is an old Tamil saying, which the Siddha Healers challenged!

The Siddhas define the human body as an organised living manifestation that is constantly being broken down and built up, without its identity being denied in any way.

These ancient Tamil Saints make no precise distinction, between arteries, veins, lymphites, nerves, tendons, meridians, or for that matter even between mind and matter. They concern themselves with the 'system of forces' within the body - the forces responsible for enabling the human body to move, breathe, digest and think.

VARMA

Varma is an ancient Siddha Science describing a number of spots, points or locations all over the human body that hold vital importance in the wholistic functioning of this living organism. As the title states these Varma points can either heal or harm the human body. They can also be described as the connecting junctions between the physical body and the pranic body (subtle body). They are psychophysical and not gross in nature like bodily organs.

The ancient works of the Siddhas contain songs denoting the vital importance of each such Varma location in our body. The verses describe how each point is inter-connected with another. And this ancient system is therapeutically used to cure and heal various injuries, ailments afflicting the body.

Before we speak further about Varma Therapists and the system practiced by them, let me introduce the other valued dimension, beside Therapeutic Varma - Martial Arts! Yes, this ancient knowledge seems to be the foundation of all Combat skills used in the Kalari system of martial art flourishing in present day Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Varma Science was taught strictly in the Guru Sishya manner (Master and disciple). Varma teachers are called 'Varma Asan' and a Varma combat soldier is called 'Varmanian'.

Varma Masters impart the knowledge of this science only after elaborate scrutiny and careful selection of a disciple, implying this art meant for only the chosen few. Once selected the student is taught the exact location, frequency, pressure and entire treatment protocol, which may take as long as 12 years. Strict conditions are adopted to prevent the misuse of these sacred techniques.

To learn and master the Varma system, one first needs to understand the three core principles of the Siddhas science of Bio-nature.

The first principle

The body or any matter in the universe is not static, but acting and reacting with external forces all the time, the result of which prana is in constant motion and adjustment within a body.

The second principle

The Amritha ascends through the Varma points situated on the left half of the body after the new moon and descends through the right half of the body after full moon.

The third principle

The student needs to master the understanding of the 96 Tattvas that organise the entire human living system, as they are the basis of

Varma physiology. Some of them have been explained in earlier chapters.

First principle:

As we know, Prana is the life energy in motion within our body. In accordance to our in take of food and our lifestyle, Prana is affected and responds in that nature, quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Our human body absorbs prana through the various senses such as:

Through food

Through the breath

Through the listening and hearing of information or music

Through the visual ability of various incidents .

Through daily habits and lifestyle

And even our mind absorbs prana by the mode of thought

A person with a good level of Pranic absorption, taken in an apt manner, leads a balanced, constructive and authentic life.

In the case of poor Pranic consumption we have given below the kind of impact felt in their lives.

A regular smoker has weakened pranic assimilation in the chest area, which affects all the kinds of 'pranic exchange' throughout the body and leads to symptoms of body pain and a weak immune system.

In the case of a chronic alcoholic's the liver is severely impaired. Within the body the liver is considered, as the accumulator of energy and is known as the 'seat of the subtle body' as per the Siddha system. So, an alcoholic's liver would not serve as a good assimilator of energy nor would it be able to sustain much of the little energy that it does assimilate. This disorder within the body reflects in his personality as a trait of impulsiveness.

This kind of contaminated prana in the body is also treated under the Tantric Siddha system.

The pranic energy, as a breath of life, is always in motion in the body. The Siddhas call this breath of life as Vaasi. In certain places of the body, this pranic energy is vulnerable to affliction. These points are called as Varma points, which is why the Siddhas give a short definition as 'Vaasi Thadai Padum Idam Ellam Varmam', which means 'wherever the flow of Vaasi gets obstructed becomes a Varmam or vital spot'.

Second Principle:

*"To reveal the size of life-breath, Jiva
it is like: splitting cow hair, soft, into hundred tiny parts
and then each into a thousand parts divide,
The size of Jiva is, that, one part of the one hundred thousand".*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2011

Not many theories offer a clear explanation to the question precisely where is life located within our body. But the Siddha system accurately describes that 'life' within holds a particular location from where it operates throughout the entire body. This is called as Amritha Nillai, the position of Amritha.

They explain this location doesn't remain permanent in one spot of our body and instead travels from place to place according to the lunar cycle. In ancient Indian mythology the moon is said to symbolise the 'bowl of nectar', due to its nourishing and cooling influence. Also, one can find a crescent moon in the matted locks of Siva's hair indicating the flow of nectar from the head region.

Just as waves of the ocean create different tides under the influence of the lunar cycle, likewise within our body the Amritha Nillai shifts and affects the flow of prana.

For instance during the new moon, Amavasya, the Amritha Nillai, would be found in the right big toe of a man and the left big toe of a woman. In case of any injury occurring at this time to that toe, would take an unusually long time to heal. Moreover, if any surgical operation is performed on the location of the big toe on this day, it would lead to severe adverse effects to the person since it is where 'life' is and any direct damage to it would damage the entire body.

Once, one of my Siddha Teachers said to me,

'just as there is an external lunar cycle, so too, there is one within our own body. And there is a known path based on this inner function whereby one can ascend to an experience of Truth'.

This is the vital principle upon which the Tantric Siddha system of sexual Yoga is based. This Yoga, they call, 'Parianga Yogam'. The word 'Pari' means bed and 'Anga' means portion of the body and the word 'Yogam' indicates Union. He also mentions Siddha Bogar and Siddha Gorakkar as Masters of this Yoga. The work 'Thirumanthiram' by the Siddha Thirumoolar carries an exclusive section on this yoga.

As we saw the internal pulse of life in our body can be afflicted in specific vulnerable places according to the first principle. The second principle says that the variation in the flow of life-energy not only gets modified by external afflictions but also is influenced by our inherent connection with the diurnal cycle of the moon.

Third Principle:

As the Tattwas are interconnected with the vital spots, an in depth understanding of the Tattwas plays a vital role for a Varma Therapist.

Earlier, in the chapter, Creation of Tattwas, we discussed in depth only 26 Tattwas. The remaining 70 Tattwas have been briefly touched upon in the course of the book.

They are:

The 6 Yogic chakras,
the 10 kinds of vital air (Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana, Vyana...),
the 10 different important Nadis (Idakala, Pingala, sushumna, singuvai, koorma...)
And the 3 Doshams or Prakrithi.

(An elaborate discussion of these 70 Tattwas lies beyond the scope of this book.)

We cite a small self-explanatory example:

There is a vital spot by the name of 'Kallidai Varmam' situated in the Mooladharam (basal Chakra) which is the region of 'Apana', the downward moving Prana, responsible for excretory functions. In case of injury to this vital spot the associated movement of Apana gets affected and the excretory functions also feel the impact.



Given below are names of some of the available ancient 'palm leaves' (Manuscripts) dealing mainly with Varma points, the effect of blows and injuries and ways of treating them.

Varma Sutra
Varma peerangi
Varma thiraugole
Varma ponnosi
Varma kundoosi
Varma odivumurivu sari
Varma Jeevakandam
Varma Nalokolmathirai
Varma villumvisayum Sara sutra
Varma Guru nadi
Varma Alavugol
Varma Oosi mugam
Naal Mani Thiravukol
Varma Sara Sutra
Varma Kannadi
Varma Suchhadhi Succham
Pavai Thiravukol
Agasthiyar Kambhu Sutram

The above Works also describe the qualifications needed to learn the Varma system and more so the ethics to be followed while practicing it.

For example in the book, 'Varma Sutra' it says:

“As the science of Varma deals directly with the lives of people, if it is taught to people of unworthy character, it could spread in society as an evil. Hence it is imperative that the science of Varma be taught only to those of pious nature and righteous character”.

This indicates one should learn this sacred art only from an authentic and competent Varma Master.



VITAL SPOTS

There are several 100 vital spots in the human body, of which 108 are considered as major ones.

12 of these are considered main. If any of these are adversely affected by impact, injury or accident it could lead to death.

After the 12 main ones come the other 96. If any harm comes to any of the 96 spots, they, unlike the earlier 12 carry the possibility of being healed, provided they are attended to by a Varma therapist in proper time, before it's too late.

The 108 vital spots are seated throughout the 5 broad regions of the body as described below:

- 25 are found around the head region
- 45 are between the neck and umbilicus region, (naval area)
- 9 are found between the umbilicus and anus region
- 14 vital spots are spread through the upper limbs region
- and 15 vital spots are scattered throughout the lower limbs region.

Let us see which of these 108 vital spots are found in the six Yogic Chakras:

And a few other vital Spots are described below:

CHAKRA	Name Of Varma Spot in Tamil
Mooladharam	Annakalam Varmam
Swadhistanam	Kallidai Kalam
Manipoorakam	Urumi Kalam
Anahatam	Ner Varmam
Visuddhi	Thummi Kalam
Agnai	Thilartha Kala Varmam
Sahasraram	Kondai Kolli Varmam

Locations	Name Of Varma Spot in Tamil
Big toe of foot	Booli kalam Varmam
Sole	Vellai Varmam
Knee	Sanni Varmam
Thigh	Amaikala Varmam
Abdomen (lower Stomach)	Anna Kalam Varmam
Chest	Dhusiga Varmam (8 Spots)
Neck	Sangu Thiri Kalam Varmam
Fore Head	Moorthi Varmam
Eye Brow	Malematra Kalam Varmam
Medulla (Back Portion of head)	Pitari Kalam Varmam
Skull (Top of the head)	Kondai Kolli Varmam

Depending on the nature of the occupied energy in a particular spot or place, the spot gets its different names in the Siddha Varma system. This approach is not seen in the Ayurvedic Marma system.

When energy gets stabilised in a particular spot the Siddhas name it as a Varmam. For example Jawvu Varmam (located four fingers below the inner armpit). The name itself indicates that the energy is stable and localised in that particular spot; contrary to some of the vital spots where energy is found to be oscillating. The Siddhas named these spots using the suffix, Kalam. For example Thilartha Kalam (located in the centre of the two eyebrows). The names given by the Siddhas to each vital spot indicate its type of energy movement. The style of attack or the therapeutic retrieval approach varies based on this.



People wear rings in their day to day lives in very casual manner, quite oblivious to its affect on the body. A ring in each specific finger results in a curative effect.

RING WORN ON	AREA THAT GETS VITALISED
Middle finger	Lungs
Ring Finger	Heart
Little Finger	Kidney
Thumb	Brain

Physical locations corresponding to every Varma point are found over major neural plexus', major endocrinal glands, muscle junctions, joint spaces, important blood vessels and soft parts. It is in these places that the vital body force - Prana is present.

Our subtle vital body is called *Suksma Sarira* according to the Northern Tantric system and *Puri Attakam* according to the ancient Siddha system.

An accurate blow or exact touch to any one of these points, applied with calculated force (Matrai), frequency (Illakam), and pressure (Alutham), can affect and result in a minor to major injury, instant to insidious illness, paralysis or even death.

Here are some standard treatment methods prescribed by Siddhas:

Tamil Name for Treatment		Explanation
1	Ellakkumurai	Neutralizing the damage
2	Thadavum Murai	Massaging The Particular Spots
3	Kattu Murai	Bandages
4	Maruthuva Murai	Application of Medicine like Oil, Decoction
5	Santhi Murai	Divine Treatment

In Varma therapy the first basic steps adopted are:

- Relaxation of Varma points by massage (Varma Ellakkumurai)
- Relaxation of adjacent muscles by massage
- Application of medicated herbal oil through massage and internal medicines
- Fomentation with herbal pouch, if necessary with hot water, Or with navaraikizhi (a type of rice)
- And exercises

Many anthropologists discovered the Varma science was basically Martial Art learnt by soldiers for self-defence or attack in battles. The Indian state Kerala is famous for its martial art Northern KALARI (Vadakkan Murai). In Tamil Nadu the Southern Kalari systems (Thekkan Murai) prevails.

Originally, in the days of Kalari fighting systems the Varma science was used as combat skill as well as for healing purposes. But these days the Varma science is mostly applied therapeutically.

The Varma Science stands classified into five major areas:

- 1. Padu Varmam
- 2. Thodu Varmam

3. Tattu Varmam
4. Mei Theenda Kalam (Mei means body, Theenda means without contact)
5. Nokku Varmam (Nokku means by sight)

From the main five classifications, the first three are related to blows received from attack or injury solely by physical contact.

The remaining two, are afflictions without the physical nature of touch or body contact.

Apart from these major classifications there are a few more minor ones as listed below:

1. Naal Varmam

The varma spots that have a corresponding relationship with the movement of the lunar cycles

2. Oodhu Varmam

These are the few secret vital spots, which can be afflicted or healed merely by a concentrated blow of Prana through the mouth.

3. Vatha Varmam

The vital spots connected to the Vatha Dosham.

4. Pitta Varmam

The vital spots connected to the Pitta Dosham

5. Kapha Varmam

The vital spots connected to the Kapha Dosham

6. Sundu Varmam

These vital spots can be afflicted or healed using a flick of one's index finger and thumb etc.

Padu Varmam

Each Padu Varmam is a major vital spot if Thodu Varmam vital spots are called minor ones. This is so because each Padu Varmam is connected with eight Thodu Varmams. So, if one Padu Varmam is affected there are chances of more than one of the corresponding minor vital spots also being affected.

There are twelve such Varma spots under the Padu Varmam category that can be affected, by force, blow or accidental trauma. When an injury takes place at any of these points the area of injury gets *chilled*. (Only the Varma spots 'Thilartha kalam' and 'Kallidai Varmam' under this category won't respond

in this way) and the person falls unconscious. If suitable treatment is not given in time, death may occur.

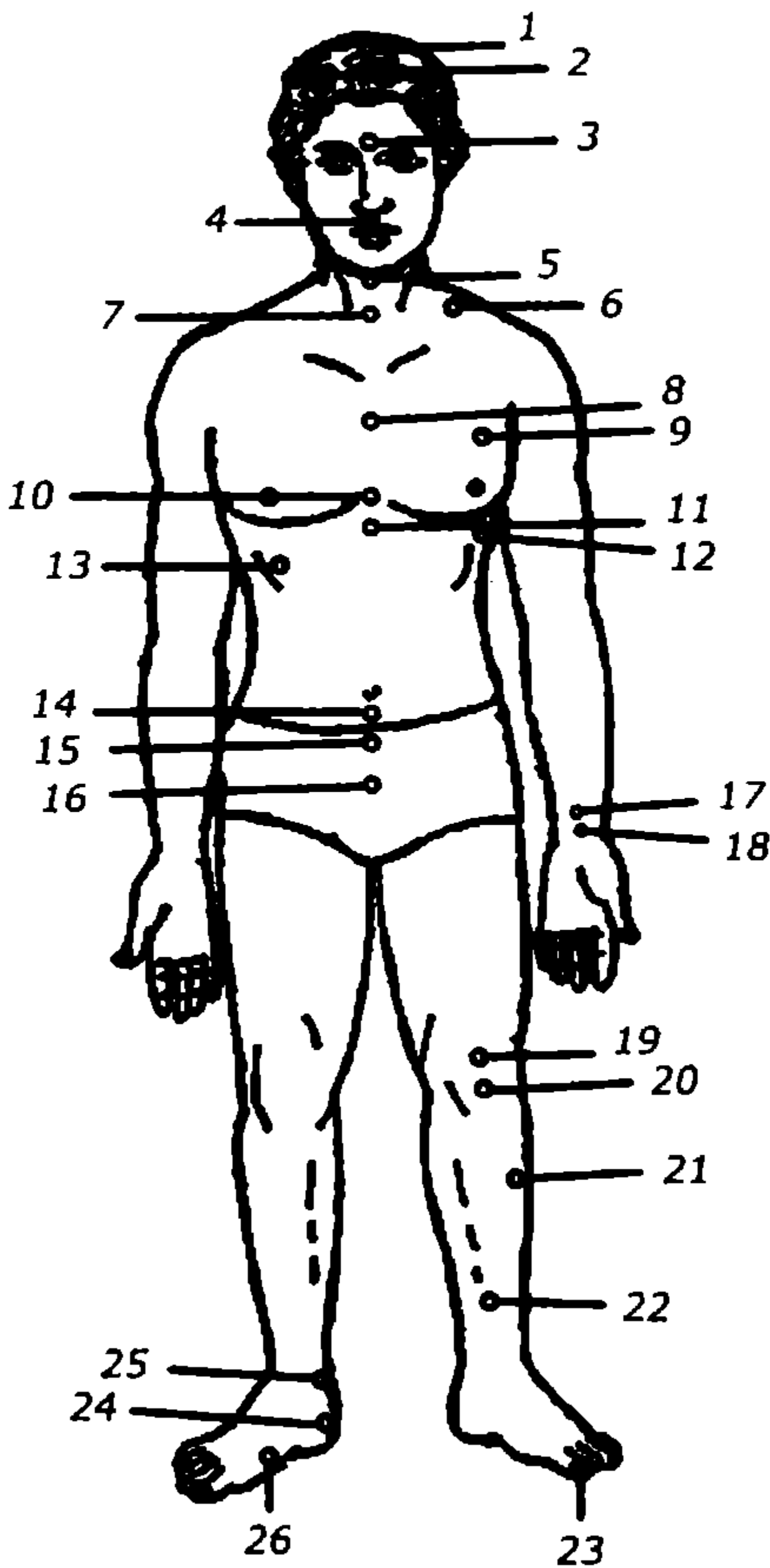
The appropriate treatment given should be the 'Varma adangal' and 'Varma elakkam'. After Varma adangal and elakkam are administered, the convalescing patient should be monitored carefully for the next few days.

Thodu Varmam

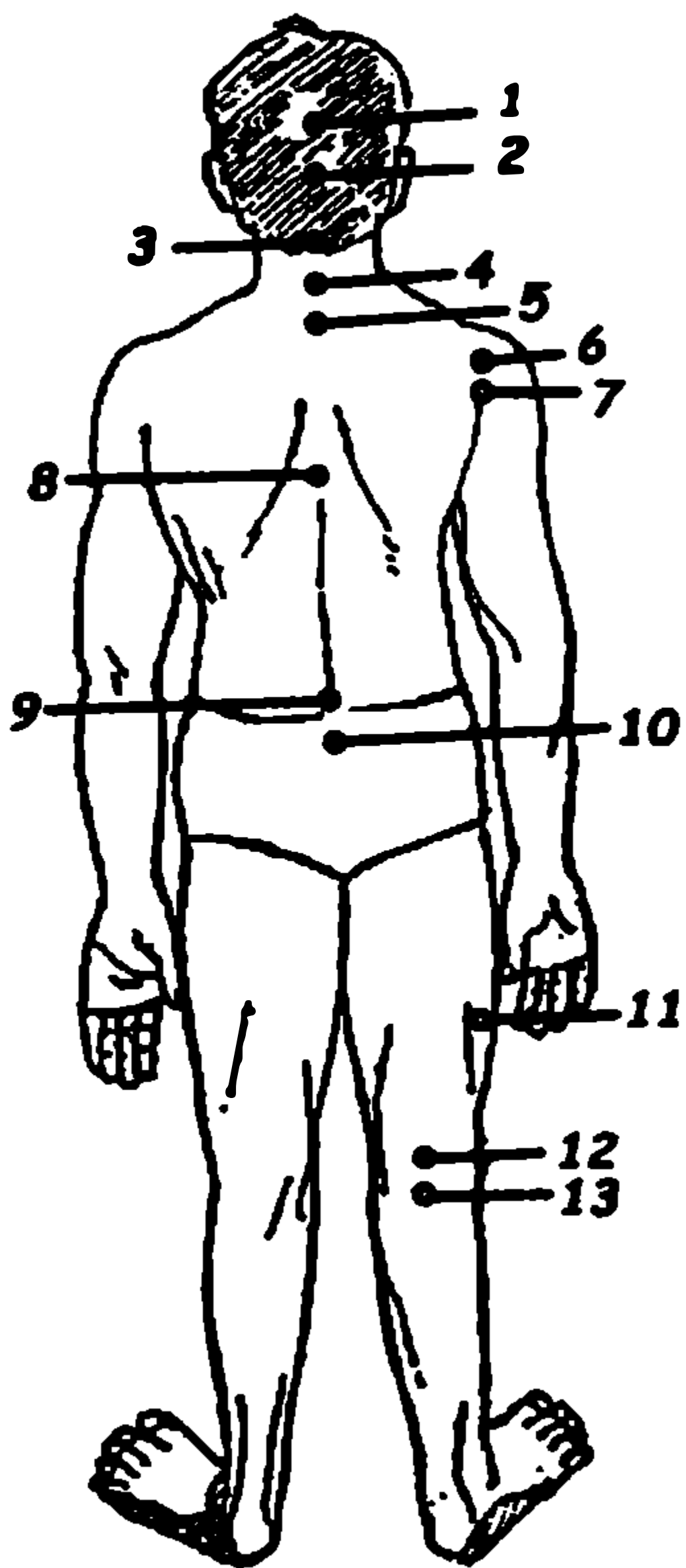
Varma spots under this category get affected by even minor injuries. The major difference between the earlier category and this one is that the affected area responds by getting 'hot' due to the injury. Generally there is no loss of consciousness but sometimes if the blow is of great force at the most giddiness, numbness of the muscles, contracting of muscles, or paralysis may occur to the person.



Front of Body

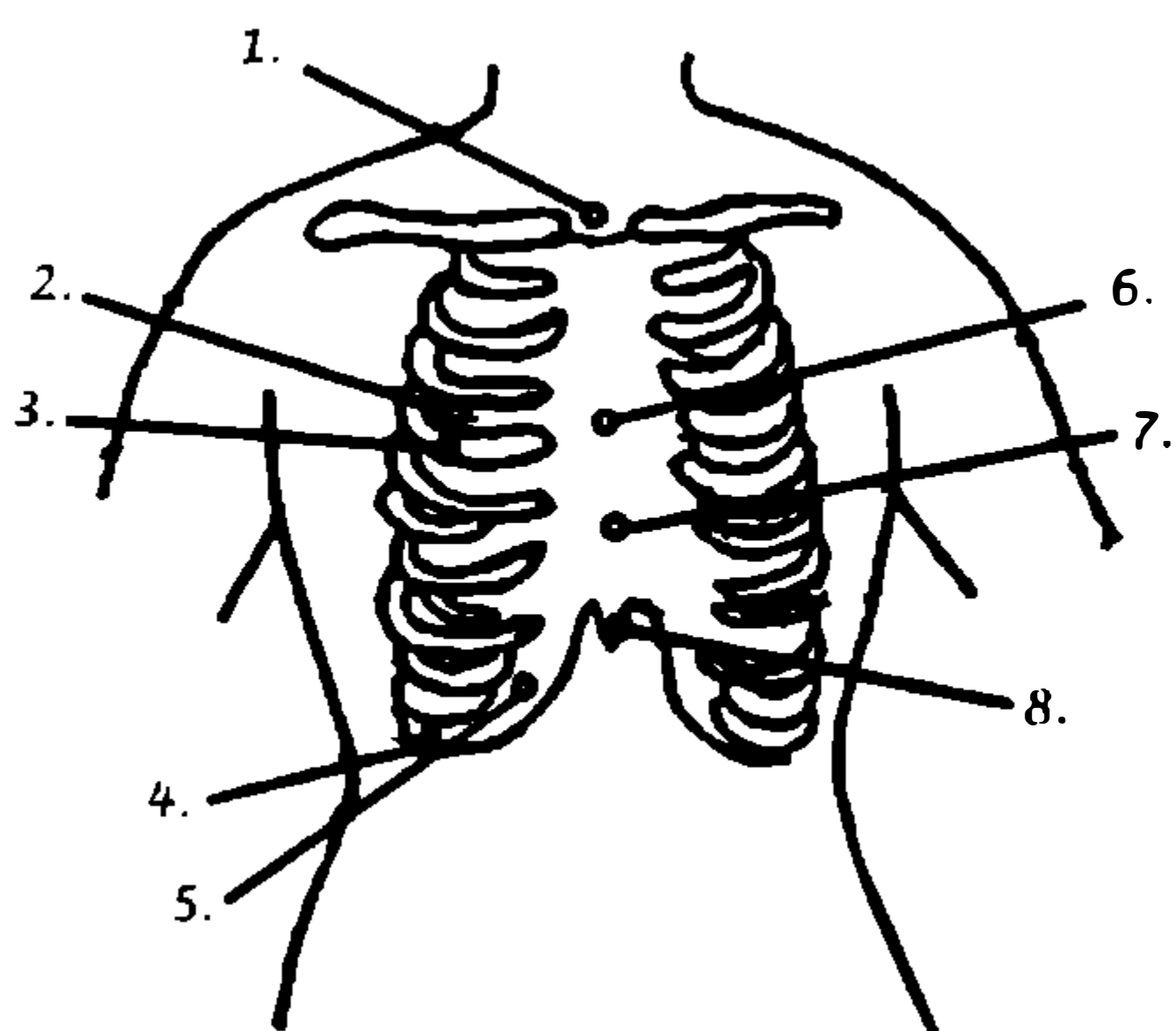


- 1. Moolai Varma
- 2. Koombu Varma
- 3. Thilartha Kalam
- 4. Kannadi Kalam
- 5. Mundelumbu Varma
- 6. Vilangu Varma
- 7. Thummi Kalam
- 8. Sulukku Varma
- 9. Ettu Muka Varma
- 10. Kumbu Varma
- 11. Ner Varma
- 12. Adappa Kalam
- 13. Kariral Varma
- 14. Muthu_--- Kalam
- 15. Kalladai Kalan
- 16. Vithu Varma
- 17. Mani Pantha Varma
- 18. Moli Varma
- 19. Kaal Muttu Varma
- 20. Nai Thalai Varma
- 21. Kuthirai Muga Varma
- 22. Komberi Varma
- 23. Pooli Kalam
- 24. Paatha Chakram
- 25. Kona Channi
- 26. Thida Varma



Rear of Body

1. Poondel Varma
2. Athi Varma
3. Pidari Varma
4. Mel Suliyadi Varma
5. Porsai kalam
6. Puya Varma
7. Kara Kootu Varma
8. Maiya Varma
9. Keel Suliyadi Varma
10. Keel Sangu Three Kalam
11. Nodi Varmam
12. Kulirchi Varma
13. Asagu Three Varma



Chest Area

1. Thallal Kuli Varma
2. Thivalai Kala Varma
3. Kai Puga Naangam Varma
4. Adappa Kala Varma
5. Ananda Vaasa Kalam
6. Kathir Varma
7. Kathir Kama Varma
8. Koombu Varma

BASIC TREATMENTS

The treatment *Varma adangal* attends to places where vital forces are blocked due to injury. The first basic step therapists perform in Varma therapy is the Adangal in order to re-channelise the blocked prana. After Adangal, Varma Elaaku Murai is done.

Varma Elaaku Murai revitalises the affected Varma points. It is done by giving counter-pressure or a relaxing massage. By this the bio-energy flow returns back to normal. Internally, a herbal decoction is given. An application of medicated herbal oil is administered externally, if needed.

Mentioned below is a self explanatory case study.

NATCHATHIRA KALA VARMAM

*“Chathi Ennum Natchathira Kalanthanai
Thalakkumamkal Viaparmudan Sarrak Kelu
Jothi Ennum Kadai Kannin Irraikullethan
Thulanku Kinra Kuzhivathile Kalamappa”*

Poem from a Varma Sutra

Position of the Varma Point:

The Natchathira Kala Varmam vital spot is found in the middle of the lateral margin of the orbit close to the lateral angle of the eyebrow.

Important Associated Parts:

At this point, the frontal and the zygomatic bones meet at the zygomatic frontal suture that is palpitating (throbbing) in the living individual. This region is covered by circular oculi muscles and is fed by the zygomatic orbital vessels.

Effects on this Varma Spot by injury:

There is a yellowish discolouration of the face and the eyes. After some time the discolouration disappears and is followed by sweating on the face. The hearing may get impaired. The back and the side of the trunk remain cool. For treatments to be effective, they must be undertaken within 11 hours.

Treatment:

A rapid and careful tapping on the opposite Natchathira Kalam; a general massage on either side of the nose (Kampothi Varmam) is to be administered. After this, the Varma Healer would place his left hand 3 inches above the patients head and with his right hand administer 3 taps to his left hand (which is placed over the apex of the patient). This may restore the individual to normalcy. Diet wise if

the individual takes Rice kanji (porridge) prepared in milk it proves helpful. Also blowing dry ginger powder

into the nose could help. The healer at the time of blowing ties a cloth in front of his own face and covers even the patient face with a light cloth. This is so that the powder should not blow into the patients nose as only its smell is to be administered.

In case of Mistreatment or no treatment, the following are the symptoms observed:

Gradual loss of eyesight and/or refractory errors in young people may be noticed at later stages.



Matthi Varmam

Matthi means centre or middle.

Position of the Varma Point:

This varma spot is found in the centre of the spinal cord.

Important Associated Parts:

When this varma location suffers damage the nerves related with the heart and the liver get affected. Consequently, the veins suffer damage from this impact and the blood circulation is affected.

Effects on this Varma Spot by injury:

Pain is felt spreading all throughout the chest region. The injured person is unable to breathe with ease and neither can he bend forward. Incase he tries to bend forward the pain enters into the rib cage and spreads.

If treatment is not administered within five hours of the injury then the heart is rendered functionless.

Treatment:

The affected individual is first asked to sit comfortably. The Varma therapist then clasps the hair in the centre of the patients head with one hand and then administers eight taps with the knee on the centre of the spinal cord. The patient is then made to lie down and the therapist then gently massages the affected area in the spinal region.

For hot fomentation gingili oil is first boiled and fomentation is given by dipping a fistful of crystal salt tied in a piece of cloth. After the

fomentation the individual is asked to stand up. This treatment is administered for 9 consecutive days.

Internally, 'Karunkoli Ennai' (medicated oil prepared from black hen and herbs) is administered.



Thuthikai Varmam

Position of the Varma Point:

From the palm of your hand, towards the wrist and above at a four finger width; on the centre region of this curve is the location of this Varma spot.

Important Associated Parts and Effects caused to this Varma Spot by injury:

When this spot has been assaulted, the entire body stiffens and the eyesight of the individual diminishes. The individual feels weak and cannot lift the affected hand. If treatment is not administered within 6 hours the hand could be rendered functionless.

Treatment:

The individual is made to sit in a comfortable position. The Varma Therapist then applies Gingili oil or Varma Kotari Tail on the affected area. Then fomentation is administered by dipping a salt packed cloth into Gingili oil twice a day for three days.

Kurunthottiver decoction is administered internally for 15 days.

A BEACON OF LIGHT FOR DISEASES

Even if this science has been portrayed either as Martial Art or as a therapy for injury as a sports medicine or accidents, it does have the potential of healing many diseases. As the function of the human system is wholistic, it balances the excess or lack in energy patterns in the subtle body and can heal, prevent the consequent disease in the physical body. Unlike external medicine, Varma therapies targets healing the seed of disease located in the subtle body. The diseases that are nowadays considered hard to heal such as Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy, Paralysis, brain tumors, hydro cephalus can also be treated and cured by a competent Varma Healer. Even if 108 varma spots are considered main, their number varies from work to work. Some ancient works even mention the Varma spots in the human body to be 200 in number. Ancient work 'Varma Vimanam' speaks of 827 vital spots related with diseases and its cures.

According to the Siddha Varma Sashttra there is a Vital spot called as 'Booli Kalam' situated in the mound found under the big toe. This spot has a direct relationship with the pancreas. I recommended a toe jumping excersise alongwith pressing of the Oorami Kalam vital spot to some diabetics to stimulate these vital spots. It resulted in activating the function of the pancreas, liver and spleen. But, this exclusively recommended activity was actually mingled in day to day living in the olden day lifestyles. They walked everyday; the farmer ploughing the fields walked behind the bulls using his front foot to soften the earth before seeding. People then would climb the tree using the grip of his front foot. These lifestyles still prevail in the villages of India, which is why they are not so affected by this disease.



COMBAT CULTURE

Now we venture into another dimension of the Varma system..

"It was a small town with tea shops, restaurants, small gardens and a fair amount of houses. In the centre of the town was a popular restaurant where people gathered in the evening for meals.

One day a villager came to this restaurant and asked the owner for a job. He appeared frail and innocent. The owner agreed and appointed him the work of serving the people food.

One evening a big man was seen walking towards the restaurant. Seeing him the people in the restaurant ran away. The villager being a newcomer didn't understand why. So he remained there waiting to serve the big man. This big man was very irritated to see someone still standing in the restaurant. He asked the frail villager, 'how dare you stand in my way. Usually if anyone stands in my way, I cut them.' Saying this, the big man drew his sword. Only now did the villager

understand that this man was dangerous and dropped the tray he held in his hands. In a trembling voice he spoke, 'I am the man who serves the food.'

When he dropped the tray, all the tea and food spilt onto the big man. Outraged, the big man called the frail man out to fight.

In those days if someone challenged you to a fight one had to oblige, as it was significant of his manliness. The villager, once again in a trembling voice spoke, 'Sir, please give me some time. I will come to fight.' The big man agreed. He said he would be back in town six months later and they would fight then. He left.

An old woman was washing dishes in the corner of the restaurant. She called the villager and asked, 'now what will you do?' The woman continued to speak, 'I will give you one solution. On the outskirts of this town there is a Master extremely adept in fighting. If you go to him he may teach you. I have recommended many to go to him but none have believed he is a true Master and returned. So you keep faith and remain there until he himself sends you back.'

The villager left and reached the outskirts of the town. There was a small hut. Around 500 metres from the hut was a big tree. Under that tree sat an old man smoking. The villager approached him and noticed how the old man was inhaling the smoke but not exhaling any. With his childish innocence the villager explained himself and his reason for coming. The old man accepted him on the condition that he would bring him tea five times a day. The villager agreed.

He prepared tea in a big pot and brought it to the old man under the tree. The old man said, 'I cannot drink tea from the pot so bring me the entire pot of tea but cup by cup from the hut.' For the next few days, five times a day, the villager did as told.

He was not taught anything. All the villager did was to serve the old man tea.

A month later the old man said to the villager, 'I am bored with this cup. I need the tea in a cup that is of thumb size. Offering tea to me in this way would be a mark of respect from you.' The next day as usual, the villager boiled tea in a big pot. He poured it into a thumb size cup and brought it to the old man. But by the time he walked out to the old man under the tree the tea cup was empty as everything had spilt on the way. The old man remarked, 'is this the way you respect your Master?'

Apologising, the villager returned to the hut, poured out more tea and walked back to the old man. But, in vain, because by the time he reached the tree the cup was once again empty. The whole day was spent like this. The villager grew more and more cautious while taking the tea. He entirely forgot the problem with which he had come to the old man. Little by little he learned the skill of bringing tea to the old man under the tree without spilling it all. In the coming months he could easily offer the old man tea without spilling even a drop.

One day the old man said the teaching was complete and that the villager could return to the town. Suddenly, remembering his problem the villager asked, 'you have not taught me anything. I still have one month left, why are you asking me to leave?'

The old man answered, 'I have made you a Master. A perfect disciple is a perfect Master. A Master never fights, since he is agreeable to everything and no situations that demand him to fight can arise. He likes to prove himself by this.'

He continued speaking, 'Have conviction in my words. The sword is like the big pot of tea that you brought to me in the beginning. There is a sword in you just like this thumb size cup. So always greet everybody with this thumb size cup.'

The villager left. He took the old mans words literally and returning to town rejoined his job. The day came when the big man entered the restaurant. Seeing the villager the big man asked, 'are you ready to fight?'

'Why hurry, let us have tea before', the villager replied, recalling the literal words of the Master to greet everybody with the thumb size cup!

The big man was taken by surprise at the villager's suggestion to have tea. He wondered how the villager was so relaxed and un-anxious before a fight with him. The villager brought out some tea in a thumb size cup. He came carrying the cup atop the first two fingers of his left hand and throwing it skilfully up in the air switched the cup from his left hand to the right. He offered the tea to the big man who was seated on a chair. Seeing this skilled art the big man stood up, stunned. Placing his sword down before him said, 'both of us are equal, why fight?' He bowed and left.

The villager thought his Master's advice of greeting everybody with tea in a thumb size cup really works!!!

People began calling him Master.



The following paragraph has been mentioned in the Songs of DakshinaMurthi Kaviyam- 1000, one of the Ancient Siddha Treatises.

"The ancient Sages after observing how the forest birds and animals fought with each other by jumping, hiding, firmly standing ground, confronting, and swiftly attacking, went on to formulate the various stances and techniques and recorded these in the palm scripts for the well being and benefit of humans."

Colonel Welsh, who was in Tamil Nadu during the British rule, wrote in his Book, Memories of Military life, as follows:

"Once, hunting with the King Periya Marudhu, we were suddenly faced by a tiger. Seeing the tiger the King got off his horse and jumped. Catching hold of the tiger's tail, he swung it around and threw it a distance of twenty feet. When the tiger came to attack again with open jaws, the King kicked him with his legs. Then holding the tiger's jaws tore the tiger into two. When we returned he proudly showed his friends the fangs of the tiger he had plucked out and laughed.

I learnt the skill of spear fighting, from his brother Chinna Marudhu. A weapon by the name of Valari was used only in Tamil Nadu. Highly skilled in using this weapon he put it to use in his battles. He could throw it towards a target as far as 300 feet and could even retrieve it after that. Such a skilled warrior was Chinna Marudhu.



The ancient concepts of the Varma system had a deep influence on the Kalari system and aided in formulating a separate branch of offence and defence training techniques called *Verumkai prayogam*, the 'bare hand' fight.

Evidently, all combative techniques require a thorough anatomical knowledge of the human body, especially of its vulnerable spots. The knowledge of Varma system presents us with twin faces - martial and therapeutic art, as mentioned earlier. At present the face of Martial Art seems to have lost importance and use. This combative aspect wanes day by day whereas the therapeutic element is still in effect and in practice, serving people by curing a number of ailments.

But, one can still learn this ancient combat art (Kalari system), in the present day South India, in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where genuine Asans (Masters of Combative Science) are available.

In Kerala all the techniques used in combat are taught entirely under the Kalari system. In Tamil Nadu, over the years these techniques diversified into different branches of martial art systems under the names of *Silambam* (stick combat), *Kai varisai* (Hand combat), and *Kuthu Varisai* (Boxing), and *Malyudham* (wrestling), and last but not least *Esoteric Martial art* used by persons of hard penance living in forests as defence against wild animals and thieves.



ESOTERIC MARTIAL ART

The physics theory of 'big bang' can serve as an example for the standing practices revealed by the Siddhas. The theory states all energy and matter condenses into an infinitesimal point of immense density and then explodes in an unimaginable explosion of energy. As per that theory, it is how the universe came into existence. The singularity point described above is called 'Bindu', and the explosion as 'Natham' in the Siddha tradition.

The underlying principle of Esoteric Martial arts, holds 3 types of energy phenomena:

- Centripetal energy
- Centrifugal energy
- Combined rhythm

Centripetal energy

Centripetal energy is of a receiving nature and shown by actions of yielding, deflecting, guiding, borrowing, trapping, wrapping and coiling around. It is a pulsation or an incoming force; from periphery to centre.

Centrifugal energy

The method used in employing centrifugal energy contains numerous principles of discharging the full force and power either in smooth

wavelike motions or in short pulse-like actions, rising from various parts of the physical body or from the chakras of our subtle body. It is described to have a delivering nature; as a pulsation or an ongoing force; from centre to periphery.

Combined Rhythm

Based on the use of both, receiving and delivering, an energetic phenomenon gives birth to a combined pulsating rhythm creating a spiral wave of energy.

The ancient Seers designed standing meditative stances to understand these three energy phenomena. These stances teach us how to be aware of our own tension and how to release it. This makes the entire body highly sensitive towards balance and motion because only if we understand the function of our own balance and motion can we understand the same existing in nature and in other living beings.

From the art of the three energy phenomena, the first one teaches how to fill the balanced and emptied body with energy, permeating entirely from the feet to the top of the head, combined with the intention of contracting or expanding.

The second teaches us to take this energy and project it at will in a chosen direction, directing the force to a general or specific target.

The third one is a state of perfectly balanced energies in which one's senses are finely attuned, combining both the receiving and directing energies.

All of these principles reflect in Vaasi Kalari and Vaasi Varma as the Esoteric Martial System of Siddha tradition.

The Pelvic area in the human body holds the centre of gravity. It is where the entire weight of the body is balanced, co-ordinated and integrated. In case of prolonged imbalance in this centre, the body-build of the person takes on different shapes or contours, to counter this imbalance. For instance, some hips protrude heavily or shoulders protrude or curve, or bellies hang out and some have problems in functions of elimination, procreation or digestion, which may lead to other ailments in future.

The Kalari system describes the centre of gravity to be found in the Basal Chakra, the Mooladharam. There are practices that teach one to find one's own centre of gravity and strengthen it. After that, one is taught to use this collected energy and transform it into an active burst of movement. The word Kalari is derived from the root word *Kalam*, meaning 'Field'. Using a balanced wholesome movement for a big impact with minimum effort the centre of gravity and the nature of the field should be attuned as 'One', in complete harmony.

For a Combat Master the earth is His centre of gravity.

During training, one is made to practice in different types of fields, such as sloping, flat, slanting and steep, under ground, in a water hole, high altitudes and even in trees. These varying practices are designed to awaken a deeper awareness in the practitioner about the changing nature of the centre of gravity according to the change in field. In this Martial Art the attention is not narrowed to the opponent but to ones own solid grounding. The perfect grounding, leads to perfect up-lift. The stances applied are called as “*Suvadu*”. *Suvadu* includes both standing positions and moving stances.

There are three standing meditative stances fundamentally important to Esoteric Martial art. These combative standing meditation postures are ancient techniques that have evolved through many changes from its roots.

There are three stances of particular attitudes used in this practice.

Verumena Nitral Suvadu (Fully open or empty stance)

Karuvena Nitral Suvadu (Womb stance)

Malaiyena Nitral Suvadu (Mountain stance or universal pole)

These three stances generate an inner energy skill/ strength. With the correct instruction and supervision of a Master, a student can gradually develop and then explore the mysterious powers of energy phenomena.

Initially, the student learns to feel himself and correct any misalignments within his or her body through the standing practices. Then he/ she learn to develop a nature of control over the physical tension, life's mobilising power, within his body. While practicing the first stance, one first uses the quiet posture of emptiness to create stillness and reduce all external influences.

Natural Centre of Gravity

- Stand with your feet together, body relaxed, hands loosely dropped by your sides, knees soft.
- For both feet draw imaginary marks on the spots where the little toes rest.
- Keeping the heels together move your big toes to the imaginary spots drawn. (The place where the little toe was earlier).
- Now shift only the heels and bring them in line with the toes. Now the feet are straight and slightly apart.
- Notice that if an imaginary line is drawn upward from the place of the little toe and taken all the way up pass the body, the toes are in line with the hips, the pelvic region.
- Feel the weight of the body. Try and sense where the weight rests.

This is the natural stance where the centre of gravity of the body drops to the perineum area, the region between the anus and the generative organ. Now, the earth where you stand is bearing the weight of the body. There is no isolated part of the body that is bearing any major weight.

The centre of gravity can be collected, accumulated and shifted to a different location as desired, by the occasion of that moment.

Shifting the centre of Gravity to the hips

- Standing in the natural stance as described above once again draw an imaginary spot on the location of the little toe.
- In the same manner described above, move the front part of each foot in a way that the big toe now occupies the spot of the little toe.
- Then bring the heels in line with the toes.
- The feet are now wider apart than before. The feet are wider than the width of the hips.
- Drawing an imaginary line upwards from the little toe you will notice it is now further apart than the shoulder line.
- Once again sense the weight of the body by swaying or moving the body without lifting the feet. Observe where the weight of the entire body is collected and held. This area is the new centre of gravity created by the shift in the position of the body. The whole weight of the body now resides in the feet. It has moved from its original place, the pelvic region. It is no more in its natural position since the body position has altered and the weight has accumulated in the leg area.

The Martial Art system holds it imperative for the centre of gravity to always reside in the perineum area, its original resting place. From there one must learn to be aware of its movement to different places according to different stances and movements of the body.

Moving the centre of gravity to a front foot:

- From this position, lift the right leg and take a comfortable single step forward. The knee soft. The knee of the back left leg must be straight and act as a mere secondary support. There should not be much pressure incorporated in the left leg.
- The weight has now moved ahead to the front leg, thigh and comes to rest in the big toe.
- The centre of gravity has now shifted from the pelvic region to the big toe of the right foot.

Our centre of gravity is always moving and shifting due to our movements. It travels. It journeys to different points, collects and accumulates and functions as the centre point or works as our 'ground' in that instance. This very phenomenon is put to use in the ancient system of martial arts. It is a skill to be mastered.

Ordinarily, due to our fragmented lifestyle and ways of living the mind lays scattered and dispersed in an assortment of different directions and so does the energy within our body. It collects and stagnates in the different areas, preventing a free flow of life force to travel throughout the body.

It is only under sharp attentive awareness that blockages are freed and the weight energy of the body stops withholding itself and flows.

Regrettably, the lack of insightful sensitivity and deep communion between the body-mind is what poses as the foremost hurdle for individuals today, preventing them from knowing themselves as, enriched and wholesome life forms of energy. A communion; the ingathering of all energy, is what augments whole strength and power.



Now try and imagine you are holding a real rubber ball in your arms, parallel to your belly where the pranic energy ball is gathered. As you remain in this meditative standing posture, all your internal energy builds up as if air is being pumped into this ball. No, when your opponent touches you, you can imagine how the entire being would instantly dispel the energy by unleashing the Prana in a matter of a thousandth of a second.

By the combination of a free flowing energy within the body and the keen awareness of its flow, this energy can be accumulated and directed to a location of choice whereby its power and strength can be put to intended use. Evidently, dispersed energy is of no utility.

The key implementing factor in the Martial Art system is for the vital breath to always naturally fill the space between the navel and the loins when the centre of gravity is established in its origin. In this way, it is crystallised. Then, supported by intention this crystallised ball of energy can be made to burst forth along with a whole body synchronised co-ordination. Although the action occurs within a fraction of a moment the effect and impact is immense and multifold.

When done correctly the slightest action on your part of even one inch will push or bounce the opponent away. What happens is that your compressed energy expands at first gently, then later as you imagine it erupting, like an air bag instantly bursting out. Not in a linear direction but in all directions.

The internal force is so tremendous; it can project things away without any apparent effort. This can happen with the integration of the muscles, all working

in synchronicity, from the feet to hands, along with prana. Using this skill we can carry this force into linear and circular movement stances. Any one who has actually experienced this force will tell you that those who have developed a command over this skill can instantly and almost imperceptibly move the body in such a way as to create a wave of energy over a short distance with a surprisingly powerful force.

After the advanced standing stances one learns to move slowly and smoothly in a unified manner, co-ordinated with the rhythmic breathing pattern. Then comes learning to first contract and almost instantly expand the muscles of each joint: leg, hip, spine and arm and thereafter instantly and simultaneously locking them all in place in the moment of contact with the opponent. In time this can be done standing still, walking or circling. This skill is the essence of using the available internal power - the first stage.

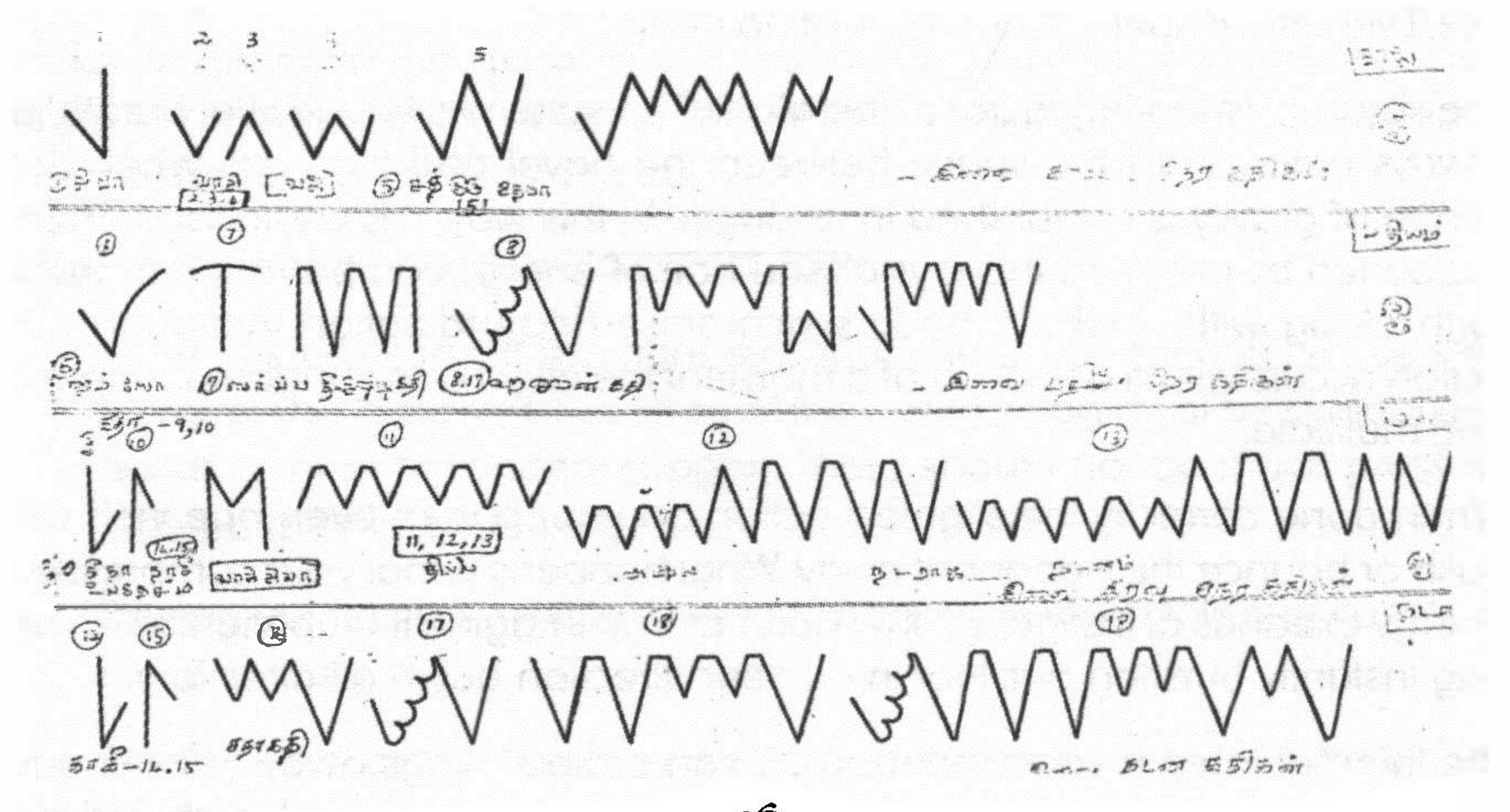


Gathi

In advanced practices, one crosses beyond the physical body and works using the subtle body in the web of prana to influence others. For this the Siddhas have formulated Esoteric Yogic practices called Gathi (Gait). Gathi is the creation of a rhythmic pulsation of prana at a particular speed.

There are 18 Gathi practices, working and channelising prana, such as Siva Gathi, Hanuman Gathi, Mayil Gathi (Peacock) Simma Gathi (Lion) Nadana Gathi (Dancing) Pranava Gathi (Om) etc...and lastly Vaasi Gathi (Primordial pulsation). These kinds of internal sensory practices today are alive only by way of Oral Siddha teachings.

Symbols of Various Gathi



Based on Gathi manipulation let us briefly see some esoteric applications.

OTTIYAM

Ottiyam is a very ancient Tamil word and this art is rarely seen used in present times. Ottiyam is the art of absorbing, sucking or depleting the opponent's energy. Many of us may have read of the incident mentioned in the Ramayana where Vali absorbs half the power of his opponent into himself. After this, even Lord Rama took into consideration the divine blessing bestowed upon Vali when He had to attack him, which is why Lord Rama did not confront Vali directly in the attack.

I would like to share here a short story about a friend of mine called Raju. Raju is the disciple of a Yogi by the name of Devaraj Swami.

“Belonging to the lineage of Sage Patanjali, Devaraj Swami was a Brahmin householder. Only the few local people living around knew of him. One day as the Yogi and Raju were walking down the street returning home, on the street side sat a black magician holding a human skull. He was performing some black magic. This is what he did to earn his livelihood. The black magician called out to the Yogi and Raju in a manner that was challenging. Devaraj Swami ignored him as he preferred to avoid any confrontation but the magician did not relent and continued his efforts to aggravate them. When the magician didn't give up his offensive behaviour, the Yogi walked up to him and swiftly moved his hand before him in a wave like gesture. He said, 'Now go ahead and do whatever you think you can.' Saying this Raju and the Yogi left the place. After the wave of the Yogi's hand, the black magician sat paralysed and frozen in that spot. He couldn't move even a finger. He has been rendered immobile. This incident took place around 10.00 am.

Raju and Devaraj Swami returned home. After carrying out their daily chores, they sat and ate lunch and thereafter settled down for a short nap. Suddenly, Devaraj Swami woke up Raju, saying 'let us go now, he is crying. On reaching the same spot, Raju saw the magician still paralysed in the same spot, crying and pleading to the Yogi, 'Enough Swami, I won't do it again.' The Yogi approached him and once again waved his hand before him. The pleading magician was freed and could move again.

The Yogi spoke to him, 'the art you know is to earn your livelihood. It is not meant to be used for fighting and quarrelling and nor is it something for you to be proud of.'

As they returned Raju asked the Yogi what he had done to the magician. He replied, 'Ottiyam.' Out of curiosity, Raju enquired whether

he too could learn this art from his Master. The Yogi asked, 'Why, what is the need?'

Some years later, the Yogi attained Maha Samadhi. He never taught Raju this art. But one day Devaraj Swami did mention to Raju how he had learnt this art.

Before he came to live in this village near Madurai the Yogi had been living in the Andaman Islands. There was a lot of disharmony in relation to caste and creed there. Because of the disharmony the frequent use of occult practices prevailed. A simple method often used to kill someone was to drop a coconut on the head of the targeted person as he walked under the coconut trees using occult practice. For survival needs such as these the Yogi had come to learn this art."

Earlier in the chapter we read about the nectar points or Amritha Nillai - the life force of the individual - that shifts daily from point to point. In an ordinary individual energy is constantly mobilised and moving like a stream, from point to point in accordance to the changing phases of the external moon. An esoteric martial art Master has the unique ability to sense the exact location of this life force within an individual at any given moment and time. This knowledge enables him to easily absorb the life force of the individual making the individual drop, depleted and lifeless, to the ground.

We see that it is the centripetal mode of invoking energy, which is the key point in the art of Ottiyam.



SALLIYAM

Above, we saw how a coconut can be influenced to fall without any physical contact with it. This is a sort of psycho kinesis. Salliyam is the art of dispersion that influences the natural forces and the individual energy to disperse in an explosive way.

Here I would like to share a short incident in relation to my Tantric teacher, Swami Poi Sollan.

"In India, it is customary to approach a Tantric Master for solutions to vital or life threatening problems. A man and his three children approached my teacher and asked for refuge. The man explained that their lives were under threat and their property had been taken over by some of his opponents who were also threatening to kill all of them. When one of the opponents discovered the man had taken refuge at the feet of Swami Poi Sollaen, he approached another young Tantric of that locality, also popular, and always surrounded by not less than fifty students.

The young Tantric had received all his teachings and initiations directly from his Master's Samadhi. After he had gained a direct contact with his Master's Samadhi he was able to converse and get resolutions for the different cases he was dealing with. So, he chose an auspicious night and decided to perform a mystical ritual intending to kill the man and his children. Seated before the Samadhi Shrine of the Guru, the young Tantric began the ritual.

On the other hand, that night, Swami Poi Sollaen sensed the intentions. He quickly awoke and lighting a single incense placed it in the sandy ground. Internally, he generated some Gathi and blew it in a specific direction.

Ten days later. A person belonging to the young Tantric's group came to Swami Poi Sollaen and asked for refuge. He explained his experiences and feelings of desperation and frustration seeing the young left-hand-path tantric teacher's motives and its applications.

I spoke with the frustrated newcomer later and discovered he had been one of the persons present on the night they had performed the ritual for killing the man and his children. He told me that around midnight a sudden cyclone had come. It had blown away and dispersed all the ritual preparations. The four people seated around for the ritual had also been dispersed and blown away in four different directions!"

Modern scientists now say that in the quantum field, everything is inter-related; but the ancient Tantric science not only had already gained this deep insight and wisdom but, had already put it to use in different walks of life.



STRESS

On a cryptic note...

“There is a story about the Indian King Akbar.

One day, in his court, King Akbar drew a straight line on a wall. He turned and asked his courtiers if they could shorten the line without touching or cutting it.

The courtiers looked at each other puzzled. It was a problem. They had no idea how to fulfil their Kings request. How was the line to be made shorter without touching it?

Now, Birbal was the clever and intelligent Minister of Akbar’s Court. He came forward and stood in front of the wall. Lifting his hand Birbal drew a longer line beside the line drawn by King Akbar.

It had become shorter. And Birbal hadn’t even touched or cut it.”

HANDLING THE FIRE FOR COOKING

Any newspaper today is filled with news about violence, betrayal, chaos, accusations so on and so forth; it comes forth as nothing but a collection of pessimistic expositions. Is there something wrong with the newspaper?

Even in our immediate surroundings we find people living with a poor and pessimistic outlook to life. It doesn’t stop there because they even have to live out the consequences of pessimistic outlooks. One of the most common projections coming from conditioning is, ‘life is a struggle’. So much so that even the language we use to voice and proclaim our vital issues is on a similar note!

‘Fighting for Rights’, ‘Eradicating Cancer’, ‘Fighting for women’s liberation’, ‘Conquering Peace’, ‘Struggling for Excellence’, ‘Demand of human rights’ etc.

Why do we never say...

‘Healing cancer’, ‘Nurturing human rights’, ‘Sharing our rights’, ‘Living in peace’, ‘Unfolding our potential’, ‘Mothering women’s rights’ etc.

Unfortunately, each moment, each one of us is blindly involved in painting our own personal colours onto the world. We do it by the way we speak and

express ourselves; in the manner we relate not only to others but also to ourselves; and also by the approach we use to step forward and deal with anything.

The colours of our mind are the very colours we will use to paint the world. How we relate to ourselves is how we will relate to the world. As within so without! Thus, thinking ourselves to be co-creators of our life and taking it for granted, we assert control.

RESPONSE OR REACTION?

Situations we cannot cope with run chaotic and turn into Stress! Moreover, remaining confined to nothing other than mechanical routines, bound by the chains of compulsion, lead to depression. Stress spurts irritation at the psychic level and expresses as a non-receptive psyche or a closed individual. And the latter, depression shows the way to a suppressive mentality building a psyche devoid of all vitality of living and suffering poor expression.

How is it that we suddenly find ourselves incapable of coping?

The roots and cause of our incapability to cope with a situation is our obsessive involvement in efforts to assert control over a particular situation and in trying to push it as per our programmed wish.

Only one who embodies contentment and happiness can be instrumental in restoring and maintaining the same in the external world.

Hence, the first step in living is none other than restoring harmony within your self. And obviously this requires to first discovering the causes of disturbance in your inner world. To put it simply and briefly - removing these causes would automatically restore your mind back into its natural and inherent balance.

When you initially search for the cause of inner unrest you discover you are hurt and this pain is creating imbalance. Mostly as after thought, we even see our own inability to recognise and heal, these injuries, hurt and pain that resulted in frustration. And we clearly recognise how this frustration went on to generate anger. After which we encounter another inability - to contain and process this anger constructively. So, what happens is that it got pushed away and instead manifests as violence in the external world.

I would like to share a short incident about a case of 'inner unrest' and its causes.

At a time when I was actively practicing Siddha Healing, a man came to me for consultation. He was a software programmer working for a well-established company, putting in nearly 12 hours of work a day.

Somewhere along the way he began drinking alcohol regularly after work hours. He explained he did it to help ease himself from the

overactive rational mind his job demanded. Over and above that, he found himself involved in frequent arguments and tiffs; he was constantly fighting, even with his own family members. It was then that he came to me. He was keen on first being de-addicted from the grip of alcoholism.

First, I explained to him the root cause of his addiction. This need had erupted from the demanding nature of his occupation. His occupation was one that constantly agitated and assaulted the rational side of his mind. This sort of a constant agitation and assault on his rational mind had eventually generated an imbalance. Thereafter this imbalance had begun to reflect onto his stagnant emotional side and this was what purged him towards a constant cathartic behaviour.

We may not be totally aware of how, because of stress and anxiety, the internal balance of our body gets assaulted. But the body knows; and will find a way to express its suffering.

At some point or another, we all behave in a way similar to the man cited above. Something, or some incident, may be assaulting us from within, and when we do not know how to digest it, we start to hurt and assault others - projecting it outwards.



Even the growing violence in the world has its roots in imbalances such as these within individual personalities. And as explained above these sorts of imbalances within individual personalities come from high-level stress and severe physical exhaustion, both of which are results of mechanical routines.

A man loses his temper and turns abusive not because he is inherently a bad person but because he has a hard time encountering and managing his fragmented and conflicted day-to-day life in a balanced way. This way violence increases in direct proportion to the fragmentation of our relationships with our self and others, along with an increase in pressure at home and at work; this being our daily environment.

In a nutshell, all of this arises from a lack of awareness to distinguish whether our actions are responses or reactions.

If we are stressed due to our conditioned mind it is only because we have confined ourselves to a fixation. Anger, hatred, jealousy, greed, attachment, fear and desire are some of these root fixations. And Ego is the primordial fixation. To be free of these rooted fixations, surely we need an equally appropriate medicine.

The process of transformation has to begin somewhere for each of us and the most visible and accessible starting point is our very own depleted body that reflects all imprints of our fixations. Let us see how...

Once, a parent came to me with his five-year-old son, confessing to be confused by the child's abnormally adamant behaviour. On diagnosing the child's pulse I found him suffering from chronic constipation. On enquiring with the parent, I learnt that the child passed bowel movements only once in 3 days.

Constipation is the withholding tendency of a body. This tendency after persisting as a pattern within the child's body took root into his mind and consequently began reflecting in his behavioural patterns. The duality or separateness, of the Mind and Body dichotomy sounds invalid in the child's case. The child's case clearly shows how the body-mind is a continuum. The mind fills each and every pore of the body!

So, in other words, we can term any individual as an, 'organic unity'. A whole - in whom the objective as well as subjective aspects of living work in unison with each other.

There is a medical proverb in Tamil:

"Mala chikal mana chikal uruvakkum. Mana chikal mala chikal uruvakkum."

This means,

"Complexities in bowel movements lead to mental complexities. Complexities in mind lead to bowel complexities."

A human body filled with toxins regenerates toxicity in the mind, and a body lacking in energy, suppleness and strength is unable to support the qualities of endurance, clarity and flexibility in the mind.



Accepting ourselves as the root cause of all unrest and chaos is a hard pill to digest. In our busy lives of today, looking within, at ourselves, seems to hold no significant place. It is considered unnecessary and proves to be hard, difficult and discomforting for many. So what do we do?

We blame the cause of our failure on the external world!

But, in all honesty, the cause of our problems does not exist 'out' there, although we would like to believe it to be so. This is the essence of what psychologists call "projection" and the ancient Sages call "Maya"

But the matter doesn't end here. After we conclude our presumption of external factors being responsible for our circumstances, as a next, we turn anxious

and indulge in attempts to remove and fix the presumed 'external' cause; and then for whatsoever reason if our attempts to establish and justify these projections fail, we feel angry.



It is easy to see now, how the in-acceptance of our own inability has lead us to the anger we carry today. In all actuality, this anger is only a momentary anger! A mild and skin-deep reaction - a passing cloud. So, in the moment, if we become aware of it as momentary anger and recognise it as a passing cloud, it opens up a whole different possibility. *The awareness or recognition allows this energy of anger to transform into the energy of heightened awareness. Recognition is the small breeze that can quickly disperse this passing cloud.*

But unaware, not knowing it to be a passing cloud, many of us resort to the tendency of bottling it up within ourselves! Most of the time, we rather not

allow ourselves to let go or discharge this anger. There are various factors that contribute to this choice of approach: pressure of social norms, preservation of our self-image etc. Under this sort of an approach this anger takes its seat as depression.

We can call this nothing more than a self-inflicted suppressive activity.

For our human body, each time it comes as a great shock to the dynamic nature of human organism. Both anger and depression incur a highly damaging influence on the inherent sensitivity of the human organism, which leads into further repercussions.

When we continue to live under this damaging influence, what happens holds true for each one of us. Living with a loss of sensitivity leads to incorrect perceptivity in our life. Wrong perceptivity prevents us from seeing clearly. We cannot decipher with lucidity nor correctly evaluate the logical chain of cause and effect. This is what forces us to behave in an indiscriminate and erratic manner, inviting chaos in the world.

Finally, we find ourselves in midst of chaos - it is our own creation.

The entire human race living subject to damaging approaches and attitudes poses an open invitation for a host of vicious cycles to take root. Over the years, layers of encrusted habitual mental patterns build up on the surface of our perception, like green moss swimming over the surface of a pond. This damp and insensitive accumulation restricts the flow of awareness. The thickening of the moss blocks the rays of the sun, making the waters stale and dark. This is likewise for repeated physical, mental and emotional stress. It leads to fear, dullness, poor discrimination and lack of faith and courage.

The simple example of the child shows our body and mind in continuum; interwoven down to the subtlest level of cellular tissue. Ingrown habitual fixations in the body easily turn into psychological fixations, and vice versa. But mental suffering created by a psychological block can be far more draining than blockages in the body.



As our mind resonates - our body resonates at the same frequency.

Over the years, we find ourselves entwined in swirling currents of hurt, pain, stress, frustration, anger, depression and violence. It doesn't diminish. Instead, each moment the different stressful patterns of stimuli gather and add new impressions to the existent layers of the past, hoarded within. And naturally, what we hoard is what gets translated into action. Whether we accept it or not, our actions are reeking of rancid impulsiveness and impure intentions.

For a layperson, the subjective and objective aspects of life have to integrate together by removing the dividing factor i.e. the egocentric desires.

If we pause for a moment and glance back to where such damage takes place - it is from an encounter with stress! In stressful moments' the body prepares for a 'fight or flight' response. The adrenaline sets off an alarm signal. In such moments, as a reaction, we often make an effort to find our ground by turning our attention inwards. But, even if we turn inwards, all we can grasp is our inconsistent personality. Out of fear, we unknowingly hold onto, get attached and strongly identify with our existing wavering, unstable identity as it is all we can find. This nature of reactive grasping to some form of identification is known as Ahamkara or Ego and its mechanical grasping is its only familiarity.

Speaking from the Siddha's perspective, the ego is the 'weaving power of identity', and functions on habitual, insensitive patterning. The entire aim of the Siddha path is for the whole of mankind to be free from all kinds of fixations and conditionings: not only, mental and physical, but cultural, racial and gender based too.

We are the sum total of all that has happened to us!

We like to be the replica of our past, which is why we call upon the 'same' again and again in our life. The world with its rising pace of day to day stress levels cannot even imagine how each one's body, mind; heart and spirit are subject to these ravages. Scars from strong stimulations at various levels of physical, emotional, mental realms change one's personality and turn him into an uptight person.

Every block felt in our body has the unresolved root of a thought-pattern or emotional fixation preceding it. This is how we are responsible for our actions

and for their effects. Our mind and body are vulnerable to each other as the human body retains all experiences: past actions, events, emotions, traumas and memories. All of these, locked within our body system, affect its function and influence the kind of events we attract into our lives.

The reason this book dives so deeply into factors like 'our surroundings', 'our body', 'our mind' etc. is because seeking the cause of stress is the only highly effective means in treating it. It is important to be specific and try and target the causal factors itself in order to bring the stress-inflicted areas into balance. We deal with this a little later...



Early in the chapter, we mentioned influences that invite damage to the inherent sensitivity of humans to be the root cause of all subsequent imbalances. In order to cut the grown and growing chains of stress or to break free from the feedback-loop of stressful reactions what we need is 'De-automation'. Vital solutions that eliminate these chain reactions and the stress from its deepest layers are Mindfulness and Perceptive Sensitivity, which is being discussed in Being and Sharing.

The healing system of the Siddhas' teachings has named three kinds of stress:

Emotion-Related Stress:

The cause of emotion related stress comes primarily from relationships: such as the loss of a relative or loved one, betrayal of any kind etc. Situations like these that hurt the heart are the primary causes of emotion related stress. This kind of stress creates irritability, depression and emotional agitation. It affects the sleep, causing intermittent waking-sleep-waking patterns, a disturbed sleep.

The three bio-regulating forces within the body are affected by the kind of stress the body undergoes. Emotional stress is found to have a mutual relation with the Pitta Dosham. The Pitta Dosha gets, deranged by emotion related stress. Pitta pacifying foods can be used for relieving it.

An additional vitally influencing factor in reliving this form of stress is a balanced routine and lifestyle.

Mind-Related Stress:

The cause of mind related stress is the misuse or abuse of the mind. For instance, performing long hours of intense mental work overloads the use of the left-brain and causes imbalance in the Vatha dosham the dosham related with brain activity. In due course and time a persistently deranged Vatha dosha, because of intense mind related stress, suffers from an inability of handling simple day-to-day situations.

Another imbalance seen is the mis-coordination of Manam, Buddhi, Chittam - thinking, understanding and recalling. The person's mind becomes hyperactive and loses its ability to make clear decisions and think positively. Unfortunately, for the individual the entire purpose of activity is forgotten and neither can he sleep with ease at night.

In this form of stress, most importantly, first the Vatha dosham should be pacified and then the Pitta Dosham.

Physical Stress:

Physical stress is caused by the misuse or overuse of the body. Over-exercise or over exertion at work for a prolonged period proves physically taxing and/or poor eating habits. Another important physical stress causing factor could even be the lack of physical activity resulting in poor digestion and laziness. An individual suffering any form of physical stress experiences immense physical fatigue along with dullness of mind. Eventually, over- exhaustion in the body leads to severe irritability and explodes as violence. Although Kapha dosha is mutually related with this kind of physical stress, subsequently the other doshams also suffer imbalance.

The solution here is to balance the Kapha dosha and activate the Vatha dosha by inculcating a food and lifestyle regimen in an appropriate manner.



TAMING THE WILD HORSE

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TO STRESS

Stress in our lives is like a fiery wild horse that needs to be tamed and used as a good ride. This fire in our lives can be tackled just as we handle fire and use it to cook. Used for cooking as well as for worship, fire is an integral and indispensable part of our daily life. And we all know that fire under control is of help; fire out of control is harmful.

The very same understanding can be applied to stress. Getting stressed sets off 'the big red fire alarm' inside one's body and mind. This alarm is an instinctual response we are all born with and sets off whenever we feel a sense of danger. This makes it appropriate to get alert by charging the body with adrenaline - to help keep us alive. However most of the times we get stressed, which in turn set off our alarm, we fail to see that in all probability there was no real and immediate danger to us. It was a false alarm and yet we subject ourselves to it ever so frequently.

Stress management is a simple skill

When we encounter stress and feel a lack of self-efficacy, it is most important to understand and trust that each one of us already has an innate capacity

to accept facts and circumstances, over-come hardships, meet and handle our life situations, and accomplish our tasks. The one and only useful attitude in facing stress is to be aware of it without any prejudice or past conditioning. We must remain in a state of open-heartedness and trust, rendering ourselves available to new options or possibilities offered by the present situation. It is futile to try and flee or manipulate ourselves into hiding in the shelter of habitual patterns of dominance and avoidance. It is preferred to remain watchful and cautious of succumbing to those narrow patterns of past approaches.

Subjecting oneself to the overwhelming pressure of past known actions is what we call a *Reaction*. Instead, attuning deeper into the dynamics of the situation can help bring true solutions. One can remember that True solutions are never partial solutions whereas all known solutions are only partial solutions. Our own habit of resorting to known solutions narrows our view and confines our perspective of the situation, making it static.

You cannot jump twice into the same water of a river”.

Heraclites



DYNAMICS

Let us pause for a moment and see some of the prevailing dynamics.

Factors influencing the shape of a situation are constantly changing. Our preconceived ideas and our known solutions stand as real barriers in this ever-changing scenario. Habitual and ready-made solutions turn invalid and obviously fail without finding any resonance with the dynamics of that situation. Instead of being overwhelmed by past known actions or reactions, attune deeper into the dynamics of the situation. This helps bring a true solution and *True Solutions are never Partial Solutions*.

Taming the wild horse means to be in the openness of each situation, independent and free, not lost and submerged amongst struggles. *Neither do we need to force nor do we need to manipulate situations to be as we expect them to be*. One can instead leave the situation in its own place making no attempt to be rid of it, and leaving it free of our struggle to accomplish it by impulsively finding solutions.



As one looks deeper, one can easily sense the displeasure and discomfort of stress always accompanied with a kind of tension. Tension by itself has no specific effect on any location of our physical body. Tension in fact is a kind of energy-response that one instinctively summons forth when confronted by a

stressful situation that is seen as a barrier. The energy we call mild tension is actually a form of excitement.

Tension is the dawn of Life's mobilising power for over coming barriers.

For any individual to live and survive in the world, the attitude and the knowledge learnt in kindergarten is verily enough. Confusion arises only because we have loaded ourselves greatly. Most often, we are caught in the over whelming confusion of which choice of approach to put to use as strategy. This is the problem, which really vitalises stress.

The key is in getting attuned to the natural and inherent drives of spontaneity...

...And allow them to develop and actualise in fullest potential. *See things as they are!* Find solace, comfort and freedom within yourself. All pre-learnt practices or tips for reducing stress prove temporary aids and until one comes to understand and recognise the appropriate responses arising within - the Natural solution arising in each moment, the stress remains.

If you drop all known habitual reactions, *Rising Life*, a mobilised energy within brings forth an unfolding of *appropriate responses*. And this empowers us to walk unhindered on our way, crossover stressful situations and leave our authentic presence in it.

It is in this moment that one can understand that an authentic response not only changes the situation but, transforms the one who really suffers.

Lord Siva is the most beautiful icon worshipped in the Siddha Cult. Sivam means both, deathlessness as well as consciousness. Anything that dies is called Savam - the corpse. The Tantric Siddha practitioners worship Lord Siva dancing in the cremation ground - signifying - the dance of Immortality, flowering in the realm of Mortality. This is seen by the fiery Tandav Nritya performed by Lord Shiva amidst the Savas (corpses), in the cremation grounds - the realms of mortality and inertia. This is the divine symbolic representation of light penetrating darkness or a lotus blooming in a muddy lake.

Losing ourselves in the corpses of stress experiences is to be in bondage of them, but to find ourselves in every experience - this is true freedom!!



REMEDIES TO RELIEVE STRESS

Assaulted by stressful situations, we unconsciously hold our breath in reaction to feeling suffocated by the situation. In this way, our habitual reactions to stress get patterned into us through our unconscious reaction of breath-retention. In order to find relief from this accumulated-stress pattern one should exhale completely from the abdomen in the manner described below:

The breathing practices described below should be undertaken on an empty stomach, in the morning and evening, starting with 10 minutes and gradually increasing it to 30 minutes.

- Relief from stress by deep exhalation and cleansing breath practice: Sit in a comfortable posture, with your head very slightly tilted upward. Place your thumbs on your two ears, gently closing out the sound from each ear.

Place both middle fingers at the inner edges of your eyebrows, and let your index fingers rest naturally on the forehead.

Place the ring fingers and little fingers of both hands gently on both sides of the nose, so that the little finger rests just above the flares of the nostrils, the ring fingers aside the bony bridge of the nose.

Slowly and gently, exhale the breath, which has stagnated inside your body through your nose, making a humming sound. (You should feel this humming sound vibrating in the nostrils).

When the whole body is pulsating with this humming sound while exhaling, the stress accumulated through stagnant breathing patterns, is relieved and gets dispersed, enabling the prana to now flow freely throughout the body. This can be done as many times as one wishes to. One can feel an immediate sense of relief from the clutches of stress.

- Deep Belly Breathing:

After cleansing all the existing stress patterns by the above-mentioned practice, one can energize his spirit by deep belly breathing. This helps one to confront oncoming situations in an integrated and collected manner and enables him to assimilate any accumulating stress skilfully.

Before starting the deep belly breathing, remain observant of your breath and gradually exclude all thoughts and sensations. Then focus your attention on the navel, becoming aware of the contraction and expansion of the abdomen accompanied by each exhalation and inhalation respectively. Allow the breath to get regulated into a low, deep and rhythmic breathing. Continue the perception of your navel region for about 5 to 10 minutes until you feel the comfort of breathing in a slow calm rhythm.

The practice of deep belly breathing brings a sense of integration and an experience of inner grounding, which prevents the feeling of being swept away when faced by uncontrolled situations. With this ground or base, developed from the above practice, one can attain the mastery of confronting and skilfully tacking a crisis or stress related circumstance.

The practice described below pursued consistently helps one imbibe the above into his life.

Continuing from the deep belly breathing practice, now observe the slow, deep and rhythmic breath, and gently in a very relaxed manner, shift your attention from the navel to the inside of the nostrils, at the junction where the two nostrils (sun and moon) meet.

Let the perception of breathing fill your entire mind. One must maintain the continuity of perception throughout the practice.

Try not to permit yourself to be distracted; but if distraction does occur, don't try to dismiss it. Instead, observe it patiently and calmly until it goes away naturally. If the distractions are frequent, simply hold your breath for a while. The breath can be held only up to the point before a feeling of suppressing the breath or any experience of discomfort. This brings you back to your inner ground.

As the perception of the whole phenomena of breath has filled the entire mind, a perfect co-ordination between the mind and breath has come together as one orderly movement. As a result, one naturally inherits a clear perception to deal with any kind of stressful situation and the capacity to naturally and inherently assimilate the entire situation into ones whole perception; as an eagle takes grasp of the world below from its aerial heights.

GETTING RELIEF FROM STRESS BY BALANCING THE DOSHAMS

EMOTIONAL	MENTAL	PHYSICAL
1. Eating sweet fruits.	Eating foods with sweet, sour and salty tastes.	First getting moderate rest.
2. Eating foods with sweet, bitter and astringent tastes.	Taking warm milk at evening time	Moderate exercise
3. Eating lots of juicy vegetables.	Warm oil massage twice weekly.	Having proper understanding about one's real physical ability
4. Attending bhajans (Devotional songs) or singing devotional songs	White lotus petal jam (or Decoction)	Avoiding long term vices, bad habits (such as smoking, drinking, drugs) that induce negative side of Kapham nature
5. Self-massage with cooling oil such as coconut oil	Moon visualization technique	Performing full-body warm oil massage four times a week
6. Cucumber, rose petal jam, ghee, cardamom, in food have a balancing effect on emotional stress	Staying in open space at night time before sleeping like under the sky; walking on seashore or riverbed	Eating two figs (with warm milk or warm water) each night before sleep for one month

EMOTIONAL	MENTAL	PHYSICAL
7 Faith in guru or God	Meditation—silencing the mind - not concentration	Every six months, clean stomach using herbs
8. Not expecting much from relationships	Planning, but not programming every activity	Following proper lifestyle routine for the changing seasons
9. Early morning waking	Playing games which don't demand much thinking	Moderate sex
10. Surya Namaskar (Sun salutation)	Listening to Satsang (attending spiritual discourse)	Maintaining proper digestion



ARDHANAREESWARA

Dancing Lore of Feminine and Masculine

Dinosaurs weighed nothing less than a few hundred tons but had only pea-sized brains! But, Mother Nature created them with not one but two brains! One, in the head that governed faculties like eye vision, hearing etc. and the other in the tail that manipulated and controlled the locomotion and procreative instincts - at two extreme boundaries.

For humans, Mother Nature chose to keep it simple, creating only one brain bisected into two hemispheres or halves - the greyish left half and the white right half. This feature of a highly developed cortex located in the upper brain is what characterises humans from animals.

People of recent scientific lore attribute the cause of most of man's dichotomies confined to this pair of opposites. But the Ancient Siddha Yogic Tradition of India holds a far deeper view. It explicitly declares the left and the right hemispheres, or the masculine and feminine natures inherent to man as dual forces permeating not only the physical body (the brain) but also the subtler realms of human existence such as the pranic and psychic levels. The ancient Siddhas affirm the solar and lunar breath to correspond to the masculine and feminine nature respectively at the pranic level. And the aggressive and passive states of the mind hold evidence of these opposing natures in the realms of man's psyche.

*“The infinite gracious effulgence
Has established woman in man and man in woman.”*

-Verse 703

*“The infinite gracious effulgence,
Has reserved femininity in man and
Masculinity in woman in a concise manner.”*

-Verse 709

*“The infinite gracious effulgence,
Has instilled feminine mind and masculine intelligence,
In a concise manner.”*

-Verse 713

*“The infinite gracious effulgence,
Has infused masculine and feminine natures,
In different levels, separately, as different body frames.”*

-Verse 715

Arut Perum Jothi Agaval, Siddha Saint Ramalingam

Based on the sacred verses of the Siddha Saints, this chapter Ardhanareeswara - dancing lore of feminine and masculine - gives a preamble to this ever-progressive interplay and dance between the feminine and the masculine natures instilled in Man by the infinite gracious effulgence.

From the time of our very birth, these two hemispheres, located within the human brain, gradually develop, flourish and enact their interplaying roles all through our lives, the escalation of which depends on dynamics, both internal as well as external. And all of this takes place on an internal platform common to all, intentionally provided by Nature - the meticulous patterns formed from the ever changing combinations of the three Doshams at varying stages of ones life. This we call as the 'internal dynamics' and is explained later in this chapter. The 'external dynamics' are our social order. It inevitably succeeds in impressing upon and modifying the universal platform of basic modes of survival. This is what grooms individualistic personalities.

Most often, the masculine and feminine aspects are mistaken to be opposing or diverse natures, but in fact are complimentary to each other. As two travelers of distinctive natures bound together on a journey called life they require to strike an amicable balance for an individual to enjoy deep harmony. But before this melodic poise is realised, one has to experience various nuances.

The implications of an overemphasis in either of the natures are simple it oppresses the possibilities offered by a balanced combination of both, lateral and linear growth. Therefore, only an ideal and harmonious coming together of the seemingly divergent sides can serve as the open and inviting platform for the Divine to unfold. Whereas a derangement of either nature, may it be overemphasis or deprivation disallows the expression of a more whole and complete being, thereby closing the doors to the Divine.

But, before we indulge in the deeper understanding of both these dimensions and their aspects let us briefly touch upon what we are already witness to in our present day world. Most undoubtedly, the social canvas of today's age exhibits disparity. Today's society stands governed by a biased approach emphasising the aspects of one hemisphere more than the other. It is not difficult to recognise that an overemphasis and over-encouragement of the masculine aspect is projected and expressed at individualistic as well as mass levels. And as our surrounding world plays the undeniably vital role of influencing the growth of the two hemispheres, it continues to lead an exaggerated linear growth. But let us read on, as surfing the prevailing derangement of our social world is only the tip of the iceberg!

Through their work, the Siddhas have purposefully drawn our attention to how distinctive and deep the nature of both, the right and left-sided functions of our personality are and pointed to a need to keep an attentive approach in understanding them. The divine essence of this approach is what facilitates

an open doorway for all inherent possibilities of a human being to emerge and flourish. And this nature of understanding supports the much needed, harmonious combination of lateral and linear growth to give way to well-blended interplay, between the two aspects.

FROM IMPULSE TO INTUITION

THE NATURE OF EACH HEMISPHERE

We will step into the world of the two hemispheres by travelling through every development and growth from its very onset.

The human brain is comprised of different areas or sections having their own unique functionality, each of them locked together by a weaving interdependence, similar to the nature of growth and development of the seven Thatus (the seven tissues). Akin to the journey from instinct to intuition at psychic levels, the growth of the brain proceeds from the lowest section to the highest, one step after another - a hierarchy reigning from the lowest and most tangible to the intangible or abstract - the Non-Substantial.

At the lowermost rung of this ladder stand the Survival Impulses. Next in hierarchy is, what science terms the Limbic system or the mammalian brain - the area responsible for all primitive emotional responses in man. These two rungs on this hemispherical ladder are the only ones common to man as well as animal.

One step higher, distinctively more refined than the last and absent in animals is the Neo-cortex or cortex, which in itself is bifurcated into two halves or two hemispheres, Right and Left. The manner of sequential development has continued from the limbic system as it grooms into the right hemisphere of the neo-cortex - the emotional or the new mammalian brain.

The next and superior half of the neo-cortex is the left hemisphere, which deals with the more abstract levels such as the calculative and analytical functions.

In a nutshell, starting from conception growth proceeds in this manner and continues to each successive level. Most importantly, the criterion of progress relies upon the qualitative development of the previous zone. Based on this principle the nature of development that ensues clearly implies that an ideally nurtured individual goes through a nourished and balanced development whereas poor nourishment only ends in further deprivation or lack.

Described below are the distinctive attributes of each section of the human brain.

R-system

The lowermost rung of the hemispherical ladder is the R-system or the Survival Brain. As per scientific terminology, this contains the Medulla Oblongata with reflex centres to control the heartbeat, breathing and is responsible for sending out signals for sneezing and laughing. It is called the reptilian or primitive brain, as it is solely concerned with survival instincts, using the two modes of attraction or repulsion - a simple defence mechanism.

An infant after birth sees and experiences the world through these reticular movements.

Limbic system

Passions and drives such as fear, grief, anger, lust and so on arise from yet another primitive region of the brain known as the Limbic system. The Limbic System is what works with both, the Neo-cortex above and the brain stem below. The connection between the limbic system and the neo-cortex permits the interplay between reason and emotion. It is called as either the mammalian or emotional brain.

As the infant grows to the age of one or one and a half years, the limbic system predominantly influences its learning.

Now we move on to explore the rest of the dimensions of hemispherical dominance and how the left and right hemispheres of the neo-cortex govern the functioning of our body in their distinctive manners.

In his book, *The Psychology Of Consciousness* (published by Jonathan Cape, London, 1975), Robert Ornstein sums up the position thus:

"If the left side is predominantly analytical and sequential in its operation, then the right hemisphere is more holistic and relational, and more simultaneous in its mode of operation."

Neo-Cortex

The cortex or neo-cortex is located in the upper section of the brain and lies bifurcated into two hemispheres, the left and the right. This area is what distinguishes a human brain from that of an animal, and is known as the new-mammalian brain. We commonly know it as our so-called conscious brain, the waking state. Occupying two-thirds of the brain, this is where human thought and creativity originate. The left hemisphere of the brain relates to the right half of our body and the right hemisphere relates to the left half of our body. But this reference is merely in regard to gross movements and body sensations etc, and the entirety of complex information from within and outside the body is available to both halves of our brain. A thick broad band of fibres called the corpus callosum connects these two halves and permits the pathway of mutual influence.

Feminine nature

In an individual, the right hemisphere is responsible for all feminine traits and attributes. It deals with refined feelings like compassion, love, qualities, spatial arrangements and wholistic grasping. It is simultaneous in its thinking. The right hemisphere functions as per its nature and capacity. It has the faculty for the instantaneous computation from the available information without being rigidly bound by any sort of a time sequence. Its operations are based on the perception of total patterns, rather than the principle of linear sequence. A simple and seemingly straightforward act like pointing to one's nose requires information to travel to the nose, finger and hand, the position of head and body, the blood supply requirements for the involved muscles and so on, all of which needs to be instantaneously as well as simultaneously processed. This is a distinct example of a right-brain function. Over and above such simultaneous tasks, the right brain also participates in operations such as dreaming and intuition, simultaneous and pattern-oriented direct perception.

Over and above, for the execution of those simultaneous tasks certain higher faculties can also unfold through what is known as 'Lateralisation' - the optimally co-ordinated and harmonious blending of both hemispheres in their functionality as a unified whole. The finest possible merger of the right hemisphere getting incorporated by the left reflects the intensity of lateralisation. This happens through the quality of perception - a kind of perception that surpasses human intellect and its limitations. By and by through an expanding lateralisation simultaneous faculties like intuition, having wholistic clarity of situations, etc unfold and narrow, petty, isolated views get left behind.

After a spiralling journey through intensities of lateralisation between the two natures, the peak of their resonance opens the door to non-cerebral living.

On the other hand, if the inferior right hemisphere gets predominantly incorporated by the lower brain influence instead of the superior left hemisphere, then personality traits such as impulsiveness, hasty reactions, recklessness, short temper etc are seen. Categorically speaking, the incorporating inclination of the right hemispherical faculty (whether it bends to the lower end or the higher) truly decides the nature and level of human perception.

Masculine Nature

The left hemisphere deals with masculine attributes such as analytical thinking, in terms of numbers and quantities as well as higher abstract

level functions such as abstract symbols of language and numbers. It works logical and sequential in its processing ability. One can describe the left side of the brain as verbal, logical and a sequential operator, linear in its experience of time.

The entire verbal function is located here, which is as an outstanding example of the linear or sequential process in time where one word succeeds another in time.

Naturally, this mode of functioning merely attracts material suited to its operational capacity and tends to ignore information that does not.

Even though the left hemisphere is deemed the most evolved in the history of brain development and features a highly evolutionary functionality, its overemphasis results in severe imbalance surpassing the confines of individualistic levels and affecting broader levels. Unfortunately, even after giving the left-brain its due consideration the reason for its appearance remains neglected and forgotten. To deter this overemphasis it is essential to remind ourselves why it made its appearance as the next evolutionary rung of the brain. Its development took rise purely in response to the needs of the right-hemisphere, and its lower associates. Overlooking this, humans have invested in an exclusive over indulgence of the left hemisphere alone, assuming it most civilised and solely responsible for development or advancement in Man. This isolated and excluding approach unfortunately disregards the understanding that this evolution was brought in by Nature to serve as a complimentary gift to the calling need of the feminine aspect of human nature and not as a replacement or substitute to it.

Persistently paying no heed to this, the industrial revolution continues to blindly favour left-brain faculties accelerating progress in technological areas. Not without consequence, as this abnormal surge has largely retarded the progress of the right side of the brain: the emotional, the paranormal, ESP and other hidden powers inherent of man.



An individual is driven by and functions in accordance to the development and combined use of his right and the left hemispheres. Therefore, it is possible to define individuals to be either left-hemisphere-dominant, right-hemisphere-dominant or even mixed dominants. Mixed dominants are those who use both sides of their brain equally, but may vary in their lateralisation. This is to say that those mixed-dominants who lack the talent of lateralisation may

experience an inner competitive tension between the two sides, which can lead to either indecisiveness or stammering.

To illustrate sequential growth and development in an individual let us run through the vital milestones we encounter right from birth.

An infant at birth experiences the world based on its survival impulses using the two modes of attraction and repulsion, implying only the first rung of the hemispherical ladder to be in function.

By the age of one or one and a half the second rung, the limbic system or the emotional brain, is brought into play.

And after a child crosses the age of three, it learns through both, the limbic system and the right hemisphere.

Soon after the child crosses the age of eight and is between the ages of twelve and fourteen it is the analytical left hemisphere that predominantly influences the teenager.

The hemispherical preference of human personalities depends upon and gets determined by our genes and our psychological and social conditioning. The factor of one-half-dominant functioning influences our style of thinking, our skills, inclinations, interests and our ability to gather specific kinds of knowledge. It also determines our attitude towards life, our relationships with people, our material possessions, our attitudes towards work and even the manner in which we work.

An individual, whose left hemisphere, functions predominantly...
...is one who:

Is objective

Is abstract

Focuses on the content and construction of any statement and not on the tone and feelings behind it.

Analyses the structure of research and needs supporting logic before accepting new ideas.

Is unwilling to take risks.

Is not open to spontaneous decisions and not in the habit of trusting impulses and intuitions.

Is willing to follow rules.

Gives importance to analysis, rather than integrating the points and coming to a decision.

Experiences time as linear, successive

Programs before starting anything

Has a definite aim to fulfil tasks

Is ambitious in nature

Prefers science subjects to art subjects.

Has Right-eyed vision.

And an individual, whose Right Hemisphere, functions predominantly...

...is one who:

Is imaginative

Is intuitive

Is concrete

Does not seek empirical evidence before accepting new ideas.

Is uninterested in programming or planning and is impulsive.

Enjoys taking risks.

Is attentive to the overall message

Takes immediate decisions or comes to conclusions without excessive thinking, only because he feels to do it.

Experiences time as simultaneous

Prefers art subjects to science subjects.

Thrives on leisure, recreation.

Likes change.

Has an interest in anything that is extraordinary.

Has predominant left-eyed vision.

While a verbal, logical or mathematical task is being solved by the left-brain the electrical activity of the right half of the brain is depressed and likewise, the electrical activity of the left-brain is depressed while an emotional or intuitive task is receiving attention. One can verify whether an individual is tackling a mathematical problem or an emotional one by the right or left deviation of his eyes.

As you have seen, the traits and features displayed by each of the different zones are typical to their section only and in the process of maturing from infancy to adolescence, the intrinsic attributes of each zone move from instincts to higher abstract levels.

As cited earlier, our social order plays a definitive role in either making or breaking the overall qualitative development of the hemispheres and their natures. It is inevitable that one would have acquired and assumed a habituated use of a few narrower ideas side by side the talents and wholesome traits, passing through the various stages of life. The intention of any Sadhana or practice in one's day to day living is to serve the sole purpose of gradually bringing into balance our acquired derangements or shallow manner of living, whether subtle or apparent. This explains the imperative need for the Sadhana to be in accurate accordance to the call of one's psyche, for it to bear fruit.

To reiterate, the magnitude of experiencing an idyllic balance between the two opposing natures inherent within, serves as an irrevocable call for Self-Actualisation.

The harmonic vibrancy arising from the union of these two opposites resonates at levels beyond both reason and understanding and soars to the inexplicable realms of intuition wherein a monopoly of neither feminine nor masculine natures prevail - The realms of Absolute Unfolding.

Life unfolds from the physical to non-physical, concrete to abstract and substantial to Non-substantial.

NATURE’S INTENT

Life appears as a crisscrossing maze of individualistic volitions and collective cultures, all of which is nothing but a meticulously prepared divine recipe intended on human Self-Actualisation.

The onset of growth in each hemisphere occurs according to each of its distinguishing natures. Interestingly, this process has been appropriately paced to meet the demands of human existence, from birth unto death, which demonstrates the undeniable functioning of a higher intelligence - Natures Intent.

In support to this idyllic growth, Nature has added the interplay of the three bio-regulating forces, or doshams, within the body - Vatha, Pitta, Kapha to act as the inner dynamics. She expresses Her foremost intent of Self-Actualisation throughout the different stages of one’s life-course, by providing this common platform as the vital underlying ground in support of ones being. Let us read in depth how this intent gets accomplished in actuality, as one surely cannot rule out or ignore the inevitable and unavoidable participating influence of the external world, affecting this meaningful course.

As already discussed, the Siddha system of Life Science classifies human life into 3 phases, spread across each individuals lifespan. The first phase experiences Vatha dominance, the intermediary phase a Pitta dominance and the last phase experiences Kapha dominance. The span of the first phase falls between birth to 24 or 30 years of age and so on.

As an additional subdivision each of these phases are further subdivided as follows:

1 st Phase	Vatha	Vatha	birth to 8 years
		Pitta	9 to 14 years
		Kapha	14 to 24 years
2 nd Phase	Pitta	Vatha	
		Pitta	
		Kapha	

In the above sub-classification, the initial 24 years of human life get further sub-divided into Vatha-vatha, Vatha-pitta and Vatha-kapha. In which case, the first 8 or 10 years of the initial 24 are completely vatha predominant. In the next 8 to 10 years, the individual is influenced by the predominant Vatha dosha along with a secondary Pitta influence, and in the final 8 or 10 years of the initial 24 years, kapha works as the secondary influence along with the central influence of Vatha.

We now take an added voyage into an infant's state of consciousness but this time we travel alongside the underlying doshams to recognise the perfect design with which Nature has provided them.

An infant at birth subsists in the pre-reflective state, one with the world, having no division of object and subject, but without being conscious of it. Soon after birth, as she grows, this state begins to undergo alterations. She first begins to sense and explore her own body parts and her attention is predominantly captured by the locomotive functions.

Vatha Dosha, as a part of the perfect design, thrusts in as the primary functioning bio regulating force.

At the same time, all sensory functions related with the R-system in the brain are active in this period.

Followed by this, alteration in a child's consciousness comes through learning by touch. By touching and feeling different objects, she undergoes the concrete learning function. For instance if you say 'leg' to a child under the age of 4 years she responds with a combination of moving her own leg and uttering the word 'leg'. If you say the word 'plate', she responds by an action of showing a plate and uttering the word 'plate' and so on. This is to say that the word and the object are not different for the child in her current state of consciousness.

This functionality is typical of the Right hemisphere incorporated by the lower brain instincts such as reticular system.

So far, only the Vatha dosha has been acting as the underlying support in the self-actualisation of the early learning process, but now, approximately after the age of 8, the vatha is adjoined by the pitta and both work in a vatha-pitta combination.

Not without purpose as the child now starts to learn things in a deeper way. She likes to know all personal possibilities as part of her learning at this stage. The scientific description states this functionality to be typical of the right hemisphere majorly incorporated by the limbic system at this point.

At the age of 14, while the bio-regulating platform is of vatha-kapha, the left hemisphere is predominantly ruling. The vatha-kapha incorporates into the adolescent the mentality for choosing her own learning dimension such as her main school subject etc pointing toward her career or job. At this age, the higher cortex comes into a predominant function.

Before closing in to the age of 24 she would have more or less selected a life course or browsed over her career options, all by the triggering, playful support of all three doshas:

First and foremost, her active search through the possibilities and options offered by the world is pressed on by the prevalent sub dosham Vatha. Her learning, exploration and study of the one correct possibility are overseen by the sub dosham Pitta, thereby forming a vatha-pitta combination. Then, to narrow down her search into her single choice and getting grounded in her chosen life purpose it is the sub dosham Kapha in the boosting role, a Vatha-kapha combination.

After the age of 24 or 30 years, by the time she has settled in her chosen life course, now the pitta dosha takes over from the Vatha dosha as the predominant bio-regulating dosha in her life. From hereon she is actively involved in actualising her chosen area using the trigger of the sub dosham vatha, Pitta-Vatha combo. And so the pattern continues.

But, we must add here that although Self-Actualisation has been made available by Nature to all of humanity by way of this common platform it invariably remains as 'the possibility of being an authentic person', and only a few are able to fulfil Nature's Intent. The rest are seen to stagnate, stumble or get caught up otherwise.



Up until now, we have spoken of learning in relation to the concrete and tangible life dimensions. The learning of the abstract instils its way into a child's existence much later and its grasping is entirely based on the quality of all the concrete learning assimilated thus far. As we already saw, a baby in her earlier stage of life learns by way of a concrete relationship. Language and understanding are also inculcated in this manner. A very young child cannot comprehend any sort of a mathematical hypothesis, chemical equation or formulae. Likewise, a very young child cannot understand the functionality of electricity, as it stands completely abstract in comparison to her otherwise more concrete living experience. It is only after the age 14 or 16 that she starts to relate with the non-physical facets - the abstract world under the now predominating left-hemispherical influence. But here progress and development is relative too. We cannot assume everyone competent enough to assimilate with meaning, all the broader possibilities of this abstract world.

So how do the deeper facets of the abstract instil themselves into a young adolescent?

If at her early stages a child has been exposed to good parental nurturing, has heard stories and tales, then she would have consequently attained the appropriate grounding and learning from concrete relationships. This very experience is what gets inculcated as metaphors, visualisations, images and blooms as inspiration within her psyche. So, when the young child grows to her adolescence and then youth and encounters a world of abstract things, she already has within herself the ability to decode the abstract through these metaphors and is competent enough to grasp its essence. For her the ideational or abstract mode is nothing but the word itself as the object or thing.

But a child deprived of a well nurturing environment, metaphoric listening abilities and wholesome concrete relationships will inevitably experience trouble in understanding and relating to abstract matters as well as the relationship with life. This may result in poor communication skills and a weak expression of living. An encounter with a calculative and mechanical nature of the abstract belonging to the left hemisphere domain, backed by the right hemisphere lacking nourishment, would land the individual at a loss, unable to assimilate or derive any wholesome meaning from it because of the feeble support of the lower rung.

In reaction to this, the individual attempts to compensate the experience of loss by grasping. The individual grasps at the encounter in a dry and wordy way making it entirely intellectual. Here lies the root cause of all grasping and acquiring activities getting deeply cultivated within a growing individual. These tendencies invariably use conceptualised modes as channels but it only leads them to a pseudo satisfaction or a pseudo experience. This pseudo satisfaction, true to its nature, betrays them and releases as perverted claims of the right-hemisphere. For instance, in History, we find many famous philosophers or high intellectuals who were known to have a worst side to them. Some were notorious drunkards, alcoholics or chain smokers. Many persistently suffered rifts in emotional ties and few even turned senile in their old age or worst, committed suicide.

There lies a vast difference in a philosopher sipping alcohol or a poet. For the philosopher it is a vent, a catharsis, but for the poet it is a way of inspiration, such as Rumi and Tennyson. The Siddhas have said that a great Gnani will be a great Bhaktha. Yes, a good discriminator will be a good devotee!



THE SPLIT

To get introduced into another valuable dimension we once more return to a child learning through her play with concrete things.

In these early stages, she naturally considers her mother as the source of all her learning as well as of all her relationships, as it is none other than her who provides all opportunities.

When you give a rattle to a baby and she shakes it, the sound makes her surprised and happy. This gives birth to a 'Self-Similar' instinct and it begins to manifest in the child. The child now relates with all things by trying to shake them just as she did the rattle. In response to this, her mother recognises or accepts only certain attempts of self-similar experiences. For example, when the child picks up a knife or a glass bottle and tries to relate to it like a rattle the mother instantly takes it away from the child.

At first, this new and different response coming from the Mother puts her in complete confusion and shock. It is her first introduction to suffering coming from her mother who until now was always the source of happiness and love. The unexpectedness of experiencing both suffering and happiness coming from her Mother, her primal source becomes the advent of an individualistic sense of herself and initiates the 'struggle to prove'.

Gradually from here she becomes self-conscious and incorporates a defensive or retreating mode in all relationships. In other words when the situation permits she willingly opens herself to learning, to relate, whilst when the situation oppresses, she reverts or retreats to another, in an attempt to fulfil herself by way of a 'compensating approach'.

At this significant juncture in each of our lives, our 'whole energy' splits into two - energy related to learning and energy related to defence. Carrying on from this point, we are no more able to invest all our energy and devote ourselves wholeheartedly to something without reserving certain energy as defence.

After the inception of this inevitable and early split, whenever the child senses being exposed or vulnerable to the world, instinctively her defensive mechanism kicks in, as an attempt to replace the unpleasant experience of the inner partition, by using a compensating process. The partition thus formed remains parted and the young individual progresses through life operating from this point in her being. What ensues is obvious. An, 'in-built hollowness' is generated. Arising due to a lack of spontaneity, this in-built hollowness is the outcome of living with a strong sense of vulnerability. All of the difficulties that tumble down from this hollowness have been discussed in 'Reluctant Masters'. Before

long an underlying yet defined approach of facing most circumstances in a reserved manner begins to crystallise during the early stages itself.

Drastic extremities and how they reflect

The above description elucidates the inception and rooting of the 'split' within a more or less common and ordinary environment, but the story changes in relation to one's personal environment. Those infants, children exposed to improper nurturing, drastic experiences or other unsuitability's, unfortunately wear a starker and harsher 'split' with scars that are deep rooted, rigid and inflexible. Dissolving this nature of crystallised split requires more. If healing doesn't take ground in the different stages of childhood then it is our mother in adulthood, our social structure and ties, that need to offer this relief.

This divulges a clearer understanding of why all native spiritual traditions speak of surrender, mindfulness and unconditional involvement as imperative, to be freed from the endless shortcomings generated from this early split rooted within us.



One might expect the two halves of the brain to work in harmony for those individuals that have an undoubted mutual influence of both the right and left-brain hemispheres. But facts speak otherwise. The two typical halves of these individual's personality share an unhappy marriage - a marriage where friction stands more evident than cooperation. Living with this sort of a conflict can turn into a ground bearing many diseases and trigger major disasters in society.

Moreover, an unfortunate bias has already been made by social and cultural sectors by giving not only lesser importance to right brain activities but even to the left part of the body; as in the left hand is largely presumed as 'inauspicious'. Unbelievably, this bias has reached even the spiritual lore, as the Tantric traditions involved with wilder energetic practices that awaken and unleash deep-rooted archetypal energies, are termed as 'left hand' practices.



As much as we acknowledge this dancing lore at individualistic levels, this very hemispherical dance of existence reflects in an over-whelming and unavoidable way at other levels - the broader social levels. We cannot but watch it happening to our towns, cities and countries.

When majority of the masses predominantly use analytical, numerical and calculative faculties of the brain, it cultivates a left-brain dominated social order. No doubt, a string of technological advances is what ensues. The drawback lies in the overemphasis. The repercussions within the human psyche that start at individualistic levels grow into a social order.

At the individualistic level, the exaggeration of the left-brain generates a distance or split between the traits of both hemispheres because of a lapse in the optimal combined use. The reactive deficiency of the right hemisphere expresses as extreme traits and disorders such as aggressive or overly passive behavioural patterns. The thus broken or deranged psyche of the individual instinctively attempts to replenish the dearth by way of a compensating process and grasps at different addictions or abnormal behavioural patterns according to his individualistic nature and available surroundings. Glaring extremities of two kinds are set off - advances on the technological front versus a decline in the quality of human nature.

To make things worse, nowadays our manmade mathematical model of society and its asymmetrical abstract mode of living are being forcibly introduced far too early in the lives of young children. Early exposure to an array of left-hemisphere encounters, especially when the initial rungs, the R-system and the limbic system, of the hemispherical ladder still need attention to strengthen, can leave the minds of young beings to 'hang' in the yet undeveloped left-brain. So instead of the child's growth passing up the hemispherical ladder in the evolutionary way of first completely relating to one's body and its various movements, the limbic system begins to grow asymmetrically, devoid of the vital support coming from the concrete experience of listening to inspirational stories etc, which are the true pillars nurturing the future ability of visualisation.



HOW DIFFERENT CRYSTALLISED HEMISPHERES REFLECT, EXPRESS AND REACT

(Consequences of which are seen in our global societies)

The 'left-brain gymnasium' of the West refers to both physical and mental education training centres. These are outstanding monuments to the left-brain; the result of which is the mass production of clerks and soldiers under the guidance of the account book.

A left-brain dominated society converts each spiritual and artistic contribution from the right brain into a marketable commodity. A sharp indication of this is the destruction of large quantities of milk because of poor profits, while at the same time injecting cows with drugs to increase production of milk.

The bombing of whole populations, while at the same time organizing foundations like Red Cross Society to give relief to the disabled and burial services to the dead, is another example of this.

Fighting legal and armed battles to decide who holds the right to water a particular tree, while the tree is actually dying or dead is another common occurrence.

A loveless, heartless, cold and calculating commerce, resting upon a plethora of dead religious formulae of precept, precedent and respectable propriety are the sceptre and crown of left-brain dominant societies.

The instances above illustrate the deranged hemispherical decisions and directions manoeuvring our social order. The offshoots to these decisions are also a part of the price one pays. For instance, because of an over-emphasis of a left-hemisphere mode of programming and calculating, many people involved in information technology resort to alcohol or other addictions as an outlet for a suppressed right hemisphere.

Another common consequence is the option of spirituality when one finds himself buried in the dire consequences of living an imbalanced way of life and paying all its costs.

A surging spread of Zen and Vedantic spiritual teachings across American and European countries is not without relation to hemispherical influence. With reference to the mass scale hemispherical inclination, we can see the roots of this attraction rising from widespread reasons like the nature of work, a lifestyle of rapid scientific progress and living an artificial mode of social life that have eventually resulted in an excessive left-brain domination living. In environments such as these, found in most western countries, speaking of the 'no-mind' of Zen, or of the Vedantic 'Self beyond the mind' has gained immense popularity, as the people would eventually seek relief from the over exerted compulsive left-brain influence. And as the ultimate Zen teachings of No-Mind and the Vedantic teachings resonate the sound of Advaita - there is none other than Self; both these teachings suggest the limitation, the invalidity and the illusive nature of mind. So, the ones who find nourishment and solutions by relating and imbibing these teachings with ease are either intellectually obsessed personalities or people who approach life with an excessively comparative and relative conceptualisation.

Comparatively, people from African or west Asian countries show little interest in Zen and Vedantic teachings based on their mode of living as their social life is largely governed by physical hard work and strong, emotional, and sometimes even fanatic attachments to religion, caste, tribes and race. People of underdeveloped countries and developing countries have been excessively conditioned in the right-hemisphere functioning due to which they are found fighting for reasons of religion, creed, caste and communal differences.



ARE THERE ANY ANSWERS?

To be freed from both extremities and arrive at an idyllic, natural and balanced ground an integral education is what is needed. The coming generation should proclaim their right for this and adhere to a total and integral education, as only individual transformation can lead to a collective transformation.

As an instance, educational systems should teach both science and art subjects alternatively. Their timetable should be drawn up with attention and care to blend all subjects in a correct and balanced way. This proves to be a more attentive way of educating the whole of the brain.

Additionally, keeping a fresh perception towards the way of learning that a child actually absorbs would also be useful. Rather than over-feeding the child with large amounts of data and information just to achieve and accomplish newer standards, it is more important to verify how much of what he has been fed is actually being assimilated and actualised in his day to day living. In other words learning can be authentic only if the child assimilates the information or data and is able to enjoy it as a living experience in his life, even if it is very little.

Nowadays several schools and education centres are seen incorporating strategies such as juggling of balls, optical illusions and other games and tests that encourage a balanced hemispherical development.

Recommended by the Siddhas is a simple and plausible solution to the present day lives hanging from the hooks of 'ideational world' stagnation. The answer lies in letting go of all ideational accumulation so one can first naturally fall into one's existential conditioning, the imperatives of Life.

So, the real magic hides in daily life situations and day-to-day activities. The true potential and unfolding of spiritual life lies hidden in the kinds of situations that have been given to oneself.

This is being discussed further in the Yogic Section of this book.

"Once Narada, the mischievous sage, came to Mount Kailash for the Darshan of Lord Siva. Goddess Parvathi welcomed him. It had been long since he had visited the Lord. Narada offered his salutations to both Lord Siva and Goddess Parvathi.

'Does your visit here have a purpose, Narada?' asked Goddess Parvathi. Narada nodded.

Lord Siva who had been silent so far instantly said, 'Yes, wherever you visit, Narada, I know you start some play by creating an unresolved situation. Today you have chosen my place!'

To this Narada replied, 'Oh Mahadeva! You are the great player. Leelas are your profession not mine!'

'Ok Narada, you have come here with some idea so why the delay?' said Lord Siva.

Looking to Goddess Parvathi, Narada held forth a mango fruit and said, 'this is a very rare mango called as the wisdom fruit (gnana palam). On eating it has the power to make one a Gnani.'

Looking surprised Goddess Parvathi said, 'O really? Then both my sons, Ganesha and Subramaniam can share it by cutting it into half and become wise.'

Narada prompted her anxiously. 'No Ma, the fruit should not be cut in half. It should be eaten completely or it will have no effect.'

At this point Lord Siva spoke, 'Yes Narada. You have done your job here!'

At this crucial moment, Ganesha and Subramaniam, the two sons playfully skipped in. They both asked about the mango fruit. Finding the situation complicated, Mother Parvathi grew sad. Sensing her sadness Lord Siva said to her, 'if this is a fruit of wisdom then only one who deserves it should have it.'

Sage Narada nodded in agreement, 'Yes, Mahadeva'. Turning to Parvathi Lord Siva said, 'we have to put our sons through a test to see who is truly competent to have the fruit.'

'But how?' asked Mother Parvathi.

'The one who travels around this world and returns first will be considered eligible for the fruit.' Lord Siva replied.

Hearing this Subramaniam, the second son, said, 'Oh, it is easy; I can do it in a second. Saying thus, he alighted onto his peacock to round the world by an aerial visit.

Everybody now turned to Ganesha to see what he would do. Ganesha was calm and passive. He suddenly asked Narada, 'what do you mean by world and what is meant by Mother and father, tell me now.'

Narada replied, 'world is mother and father and mother and father are themselves this world.'

Ganesha opened his eyes wide and said, 'thank you Narada'.

Ganesha promptly went around his parents, Lord Siva and Goddess Parvathi, saluted them and graciously received the fruit.

Caught in a situation that needs to be resolved, we most often grow anxious. This sort of a 'reactive linear approach' doesn't allow us to see the solution beaming through the situation itself. But, to a person mature in emotion as well as perception, it comes naturally, for he is competent enough to recognise the complimentary side of each and everything.

Since today's society operates based on such an exaggerated masculine or linear mentality, it tends to separate the complimentary feminine flourish and renders it 'opposite'. For instance sleeping is called a state of inactivity; we don't consider it as the refreshing ground for all the daytime activities. Obsessively employing a utilitarian attitude, we fail to see all-utility arising from the ground of non-utility.

Society more often than not pushes us to become typically competitive individuals right from our early years. They call it the 'survival of the fittest'. Our psychologists declare the best psyche to be possible by the strengthening of the ego! All the assertivists and positive thinking approaches conducted in workshops today are based on repeatedly inculcating the masculine aspect within us.

Missed to be recognised by us is the place of real strength - being flexible and living while nurturing the spirit of a 'yielding approach'

Man's fear to approach the feminine aspects of his psyche comes from the suppression of it due to the over emphasised masculine aspect. By persistently suppressing the feminine spectrum in his living he has ended up making the social structure purely competitive; calculative; mechanical; overly technological; jealous and violent. By trying to acquire solutions for our existent day to day problems we refuse the real spirit of recognising the answer glittering in the problem itself.

Lord Subramaniam is the God for 'accomplishing', but Lord Ganesha is the God for the 'removal of obstacles and the commencing of a new beginning'. Lord Ganesha is the inspiration aspect of the accomplishing process.

The accomplishing or the acquiring spirit is the masculine aspect with attributes such as calculative, planning - the stages of 'doing'. But the spirit of inspiration is the feminine aspect that really unties the necessary strength for carrying out all of the 'accomplishing' stages.

Lastly, our level of relationship with this world is determined by the quality of relationship shared between us and our mother and father. An individual who has enjoyed a good-natured environment with his mother through his growing years would have developed a balanced feminine aspect within himself. This would also reflect as a good relationship with his feelings and emotional ties. A similar good-natured upbringing also experienced with the father reflects as matured performances later in the child's life.

So, as the world begins from ones mother and father, Lord Ganesha, the divine source of inspiration to burn all obstacles, rounded his parents as the world itself!



BALANCING THE HEMISPHERES

Four different practical aids have been described below:

- Marching exercise
- Swara Yoga
- Omkar Breathing
- Nadi Suddhi Practice

In cases where either one hemisphere is overly predominant it can be brought back into a state of balance by consistently following the techniques given below.

- Marching Exercise:

Imagine that you are a puppet, with strings at the knees and fingertips. Standing, raise your right foot, bending the knee, until your right thigh is parallel to the floor. (This movement is as if you were stepping up a very high stair-step). Simultaneously, as the right foot rises, raise the straightened left arm and reach high, fingers pointing to the ceiling, the left inside upper arm very near the left ear. Keep your other arm relaxed.

Next do the same on the other side: lifting the left foot and right arm in the same manner; thus shifting the weight from side to side. Coordinate the movements of your arm and foot, so both reach the peak at the same time. For around two minutes, keep alternating these movements in a vigorous manner, as if marching. Then rest for two minutes or so, and repeat these movements again. Altogether, these movements should be repeated three times, with a rest in between. Start with one minute of movement, then rest; and build to two or three minutes of movement with rest periods in between.

- Swara Yoga - The Science of Breath under Yogic dimension of the Siddhas and its relation to the harmonious functioning of the hemispheres.

Awai Kural, chapter 11

*“The breath pass in and out by left side
At (the dawn of) Friday, Wednesday and Monday.”*

Verse-2

*“The breath pass in and out on right nostril
At (the dawn of) Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday.”*

Verse-3

*“On Thursday during the waxing moon and waning moon day,
Breath will pass in and out on-left
During the other waxing moon days, on right nostril.”*

Verse 4

The flow of breath in mankind holds many secrets!

In astrology the first hour of each day begins with the governance of a particular planet for that day, similarly the first flow of our breath at daybreak has its own rhythmic path alternating through the two nostrils, left and right, every one or two hours through the day.

The nostril through which our breath starts the day, one hour before sunrise, also ends the day, (at the beginning of sunset); and through the day changes its path every one or two hours alternating from right to left and left to right. Any hindrance or change in its rhythmic cycle or course indicates an illness on the horizon about to attack the individual.

The Swara Yoga system of the ancient Siddhas deals exclusively with health and the changes in life incidents indicated through the cycle of breath based on this very principle. The flow of breath through a particular nostril provides a practical key to the mode of energy presently available in our body. This practical key can be used to consciously attune ones behaviour.

In order to recognise through which of the nostrils you breathe naturally and with ease, freely and fully, first close the right nostril with one finger, inhale deeply and exhale the breath through your left nostril. Then close the left nostril, inhale deeply and exhale the breath through your right nostril. Repeat this, two or three times. This will clearly indicate one of the nostrils to be always dominant. This is akin to one of the hemispheres being always dominant.

The existing connection between the flow of breath in the nostrils and the hemispheres of the brain has been scientifically understood only recently. The dominating hemisphere is found to be the one opposite to the nostril through which the flow of breath is dominant.

In terms of Yogic Physiology the flow of breath through the left nostril is called the lunar breath (Chandra Swara) and is influenced by 'Ida nadi'; whereas the breath flowing through the right nostril is called the solar breath or (Surya Swara) and is influenced by the 'Pingala Nadi'. Thus we find that it is the breath that establishes our relationship with the nature of the Inner Moon (passive, intuitive, surrendering) and with the nature of the Inner Sun (active, rational, will-oriented).

Since left nostril lunar-breathing is feminine, it is primarily influenced by the lunar cycles lunar planets and by the days of feminine nature (Monday, Wednesday and Friday).

The state of our mental and bodily health through each day reflects in the alternating breath cycle synchronized with the external world. If the breath in either nostril predominates for too long, it signals one of the brain hemispheres being excessively utilized and become overly stressed.

Swara Yoga plays a vital role in the Siddha Tantra and Yogic system. Since it is not the aim of this book to elaborate on Swara Yoga as a base of astrology, Kundalini Yoga, herbal and alchemical preparations, I leave this subject as is, on this level.



The different methods by which one can shift the breath from one nostril to another in Swara Yoga of the Siddha System:

Standing Position:

In a standing position, use the right toe to press down on the left toe, while breathing keep the stomach in a mid-position (not pushing out, not pulling in). Soon the breath will shift to the left nostril-breathing mode. If you do the converse of the above, it will shift the breath to the right nostril.

Sitting Position:

Keep the left hand slightly behind you, touching the ground for support, even placing the left shoulder against the wall. In that sitting position lean to the left, bend both knees, placing feet on the ground before you. Bring the left heel close to the right buttock, then let the knees fall to the left, so the left bent leg lies on the floor and bent right leg is atop it. Then, using the thumb and middle finger of the right hand, press the right ankle, with your thumb resting on the back of the Achilles tendon and the middle finger in front, at the mid-ankle point, pressing on the tendon coming from the big toe to the ankle. Apply light pressure to this tendon repeatedly, by pressing and releasing the middle finger. The breath will shift to the right nostril, crossing Sushumna Cave behind the forehead.

Repeat the whole procedure on the opposite side of the body, if you wish to change the breathing to the left nostril. The left leg should be atop the right leg, while resting your right hand on the ground for support.

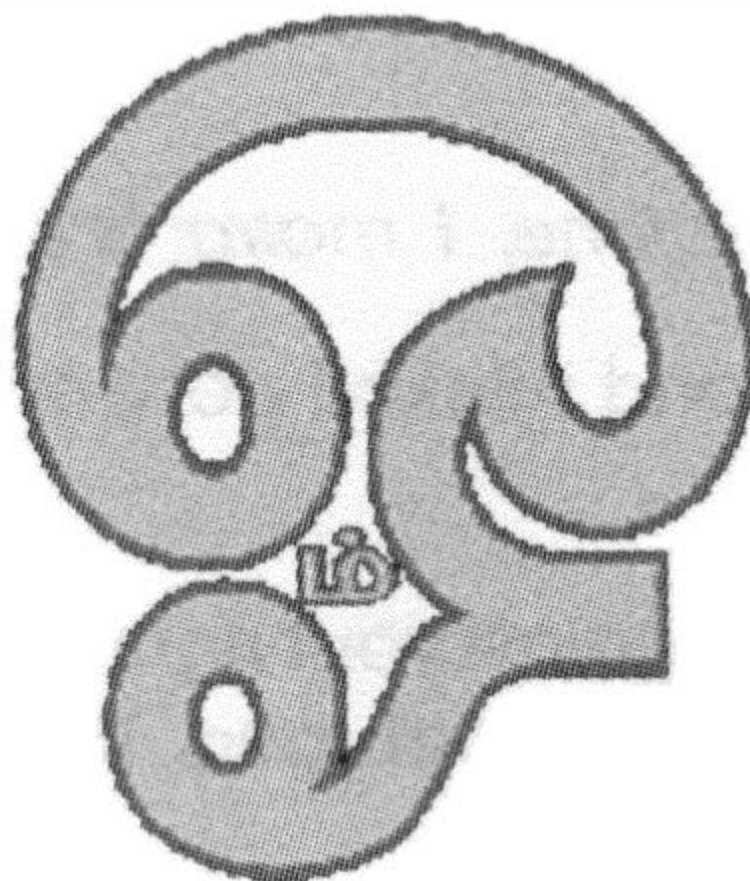
Reclining Position:

Lie on the left side pulling in the left elbow towards the left side of the chest. Support your head with the left open palm beneath your left ear. Both legs are extended, the right leg resting atop the left leg. Let the straight right arm rest on the right side of the body, with palm of the hand on the upper thigh. Soon the breath will shift to the right nostril. One can also sleep in this position at night.

- Omkar Breathing

In the ancient martial arts system, Kalari-Varma, there is a practice called 'Vaithari', where words and movements are simultaneously coordinated. Similarly, if we notice, all of our actions and behaviours are ruled and motivated by some key words. When speech and body movements coordinate, synchronise and get simultaneously expressed, there is a communication between the two hemispheres. This is the fundamental principle, based on which an expert practitioner in Varma Martial Arts has whole-body alertness and sensitivity to his surroundings. In esoteric martial art, it is termed as "when the whole body becomes the eye".

These kinds of practices must be done under the supervision of a teacher. Here, in this book, I recommend the OMKAR breathing technique of sound and breath coordination.



The Tamil, 'AUM' is written as shown above. It is written in a spiral form i.e. converging in a particular spot. 'AUM' is the Bija Mantra (seed mantra) of the Mooladharam chakram in the Siddha path. This mantra is the upholder of all other deities residing in other chakras. Chanting the mantra 'AUM' is most invigorating as it creates a coordinated vibration that resonates within the entire system. The harmonious vibrations thus generated, ultimately lead to the unknown spiritual dimensions. This also benefits us at the physical level in the body by the creation of new cells; by the removal of unwanted toxins; and by calming the agitation of the mind and soothing the nerves.

How to chant the AUM mantra coordinated with the breath

AUM is the sound of energy of the universe from which all things are manifest. Therefore all words are mere fragments of AUM, just as all images are fragments of the cosmic picture. AUM is the symbolic sound that brings you in touch with that 'resounding being', that is the Universe. A-U-M symbolises the birth, the coming into being, and the dissolution that cycles back. AUM is called the 'four-element-syllable', and what is the fourth syllable? The silence out of which AUM arises and falls back into. The underlying substratum of Silence.

(Start in the back of the mouth, 'aah' and then 'ooh', you fill the mouth, and 'mm' closes the mouth. When you chant all vowel sounds are included in it)

Breathe in first, filling the abdomen from the mid-thorax to the upper thorax; hold the breath here for 5 seconds, then breathe out chanting 'AAAAAA', continuing 'OOOO' and finishing with 'MMMM'.

While doing this, place your attention on the heart centre.

The vibration of 'AUM' harmonises any dissipation of energy and slows down the heartbeat. A perfect rhythm is necessary for attaining mastery in this practice. If it is practiced properly and regularly it stimulates the five vital forces of the subtle body and thus increases the flow of energy to the five senses. Moreover any obstructions in the energy channels are removed. This reduces any fear, anxiety and stress. This practice can be undertaken ten times in the early morning and ten times in the evening.

- Nadi Suddhi Practice:

(Chanting AUM a single time, 1 matrai is equal to 1 second)

Sit in any comfortable and relaxed position, keeping the back and neck erect.

Place your right thumb against your right nostril and place the index and middle fingers between the eyebrows. The ring finger should be on the left nostril.

First, exhale through both nostrils, slowly and completely.

Closing your right nostril with your thumb, inhale slowly and silently through your left nostril for 5 matrai potential. At the end of the inhalation, close the left nostril, release your right nostril and exhale slowly through it for 5 matrai potential period.

At the end of the exhalation and without pausing, begin to inhale through the right nostril, (the same nostril that was just used for exhalation). Inhale slowly for 5-matrai periods.

Now close the right nostril and release the left one, and exhale slowly through the left nostril for 5 matrai seconds. Complete the exhalation.

This completes the first round, as the original starting point is reached.

Without interruption, this practice can be performed for ten rounds. One can attempt to maintain a rhythm without actually counting.

This practice must be done on an empty stomach and should not be undertaken for more than ten minutes until one attains mastery in this.

(Keep in mind that the use of fingers is temporary and that finally you have to use your will power to alternate the right and the left breath by mere thinking).



SECTION THREE

BEING AND SHARING

Yogic and Tantric System of the Siddhas

INTRODUCTION TO THE YOGIC SYSTEM

THE WAY OF THE SIDDHAS

*“Sleeping, envisioned Siva’s world in themselves
Sleeping, envisioned Siva’s Yoga in themselves
Sleeping, envisioned Siva’s Bhoga in themselves
How then speak of the state, those who slept, envisioned?”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 129, By Siddha Thirumoolar

Does the ancient wisdom of the Siddhas Yogic system hold true for our modern social structures and fast paced life of today?

Yoga is the art of relationships and the art of living... but before we apply the eternal truths into our lives it is necessary to first put into clear perspective how the majority of us presently live and what is it that we call our life.

On a collective note, if we believe the massive industrial revolution has made us humans more automated, then this modernism has also made everything more exclusive, more singular and very separate. Expert consultants, specialised jobs, specialised professions, even specialised doctors of medicine and so on are the trend of today. This approach of specialisation has led humanity to suffer several adverse affects and results.

In one sense, the ongoing trend of mutlifold opportunities and specialised diversifications flooding the career market today makes everything appear readily available to everybody. This trend flows as a stream of new and varied opportunities; anyone can specialise or be highly qualified in the specific field of their choice and attain proficiency in it. But on the other hand, it has made us narrower and fragmented, not deeper and whole, even in a single thing. It is like 'little digging' in many areas rather than digging deep in one.

Specialisation in today's age is defined as 'choose one and leave the rest'. The knowledge and experience derived through this kind of approach cannot really be called wholistic knowledge at all. It is better defined as an isolated study; it is limited and narrowed down to that specific particularity - and cut off from the rest. When in all actuality, the nature of true in-depth knowledge is brimming with the awareness of all inter-connectedness and the understanding is of the 'whole'.

So even though New Age prospects appear unlimited, glamorous and inviting, a closer look shows them as superficial opportunities for isolated knowledge; a distance away from a wholesome and deep-rooted experience.

Let us exemplify this by way of a simple instance.

Ask any individual today: what is Yoga? It will be defined as 'a practice of Asanas for health purposes'. Yoga classes are allotted a time slot in busy schedules mainly to relieve the person of the continually accumulating stress. This is the New Age description of Yoga. And Yoga is now available through seminars, workshops and 10 day retreats.

This New Age description cannot be more limited or superficial. Unfortunately, the new age mentality entirely misses out on the true purport of Yoga. Modern day pursuits give no more than titbit knowledge that allows nothing more than a superficial change, which gets mistaken for transformation. In truth, everything within our being is left as it is, untouched and unchanged, even if they chase it forever. The root level of our being remains hidden and untouched.

Yet, another jocular understanding running around today is worth a look. For post-modern fanatics the word Transformation implies 'add to what you already have', and not, 'lose what you don't need'.

So nowadays, we try and cram more and more into our existent life. For example, Office Yoga, Meditative Cooking, Healing Vastu, Management Program on Vedic Thought and Bhagavat Gita classes.

Meditation

Meditation is not a solid, concrete activity so how can it be added onto your current and ongoing activities?

It is the quality reflecting from any activity you are already involved in!

No doubt, it is true that anything can be meditative, but the problem arises when we, by our effort, try and make something meditative, such as meditative tea making and so on. The effort part of it is what creates conflict. So, when we intentionally try and incorporate it as a separate add-on, it is no surprise when it fails. It has been a superficial cover and not a shining and exuding quality.

What is Yoga?

True Yoga is all about shedding the inessentials and imbibing a wholistic attitude to living.

But, before we discuss the way of ancient Yoga and its eternal flavours it is imperative, we highlight the inessentials to be shed.

If we assign a definition to the 'individual' of today's post-modern world, he can be called '*a reaction of many*'. In all honesty, every notion of today's individual seems rather rancid and putrid. Even though present day Man may appear 'whole', he is only a fragmented entity, fashioned from the bulk of many impositions. Most people are caught in a constant state of overwhelming anxiety and live a fragmented, confused life, feeling lonely and alienated from their own nature. Even psychotherapists suffer identity crises!

In other words, Man lies trapped under the swaying multitude of circumstances and reactions to the various influences he is subjected to. As luck would have it, even though Man is a creature roofed over by these multifarious influences, somehow he still believes his actions are of his own accord or volition. But in truth, not only is he enslaved in circumstances, he even walks burdened by aspects of socialisation, superstitious beliefs and egoistic motives in his competitive world. Most of his actions come from a bunch of entangled and confused ideas, as mechanical reactions. None of which he himself completely understands and yet calls them his characteristic traits. Ironically, this very bunch of confused and mixed ideas, are all that Man has for him to take cue from. This is the prejudice!

In summation of the existence of today's Man, we can say he lives under an illusion of the existence of one steady self.

All the so called present day spiritual teachings insist upon finding the 'Self', by understanding the illusory nature of 'I', or ones limited 'self'. But, how is one to recognise the limited self or the identified self, when he actually lives under the swaying influence of a multitude of 'selves' - all of which are superficial and fleeting in nature?

Till date, Man has been unable to find and keep an ideal that is capable of consistently holding his attention. Time and again, he makes too many centres as his base of which not even one holds steady.

Truth is that the nature of belief itself has changed. It is rare to find an individual adhering to one single belief and is not won over by several simultaneous, even conflicting beliefs. But people are not even aware how most of their beliefs lie in conflict with each other. Instead, the majority feels justified in moving through different and changing belief systems, sometimes even in the course of a single day!

The reason today's mode of 'changing belief structures' is mentioned here is mainly because the importance of a single belief structure and its underlying yet vital role in one's living is entirely being missed in today's life.

Firstly, let us ask whether Man with his corpus of consciousness of very many 'selves', of which most are inconsistent, and incompatible with each other, can act consistently with any one specific attitude? And whether, his activities can have a wholesome channelled flow?

It is no surprise Man moves from (re)action to (re)action, without any attitudinal link. Living in his world of chaotic masks he is unable to state with any degree

of clarity what he truly is, what his goals are and what stands as the guiding principles of his life. It proves difficult for him even to adhere consistently to a single attitude in his day-to-day living! To begin with, we can undoubtedly say *there is no 'one'-self to know*, since it lies camouflaged under the combined assault of various so-called modern disciplines. The Socratic Maxim should now read 'Know Themselves' since there is no longer a single unitary 'self' to know, but multiple 'selves'. Irony can turn anything topsy-turvy, 're-describing' our final vocabularies, which are constantly beset by the contingency and fragility of the 'selves' that we construct out of them.

The only individuality he knows and ascertains is his 'prejudices'. *He is his prejudice.*

*"Madu than analum oru pokkundu
Manitharkku athuvum illaiappa"*

*"Even a bullock walks his own pace
But man doesn't have even that."*

Agasthiyar Gnanam 6,Verse-2

It was once eagerly hoped and expected that modern science would rid us of all superstitions, human problems and solve the mysteries of the world. A brave new world would be made available to all of humanity. But a rain of multiple realities and worse still, a cluster of multiple approaches to reality make the task of making sense of them that much more difficult - and knowledge today only disables.



After we have sized up a clear picture defining the fragmented livingness of today's Man, let us look at the factors contributing to it.

Subtly, within the whole living community transpires a constant swing of energy levels as the flow of life. Underneath, we are all constantly undergoing a process by which we derive and spend energy. This process or phenomenon happens not only through our breath but also in other ways such as food, thoughts, environment etc. So, if we scrutinize the above scenario through an 'energy' perspective we find that beneath the surface of the continuous and overwhelming frustration and depression we live in, we are constantly bombarded by the resulting frequent changes of inner energy levels; and Man reacts to the world within and outside from this place of changing energy levels.

Many individual and collective factors participate in these energy-phenomena. Combined with human acquiring-tendencies responsible for the build up of prejudices, conditionings and multi-faces, let us start from the Individual Domain of our Acquired conditioning and see its influence.



ACQUIRED CONDITIONING

THE INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN

The famous Russian psychologist Pavlov once performed an experiment on a dog.

Before feeding the dog, he would ring a bell. After a short period, he noticed that whenever he rang the bell the dog began to salivate. He discovered how the dog acquired a specific conditioning in relation to his food.

By this example, we can see how a simple survival instinct converts into a reflex conditioning in relation to the surrounding environment. The dog's memory associated food with the ring of the bell.

Likewise even the human brain stores everything as associative memory.

When we see a flower, we either adore its beauty as it is, or we admire it by associating it with our own interpretation by linking to a prior experience.

So what we actually see is our likes and dislikes and not the actual.

Take another example.

When we see a white rose we could respond by remaining enchanted by its beauty and allow the beauty to directly touch us, as it is, or we could give it the associative syndrome - thus; 'the white Rose shines like a pure white pearl.' The first approach is an existential experience; the second is interpretative and an ideational experience.

Why does one like to associate one with another?

Because it is the only way, one's mind can keep it as a memory.

And why does mind like memory?

Because it likes to re-live an experience to perpetuate itself! The longing to perpetuate is based on the mind's own inner anxiety of non-being. We like to derive a pseudo sense of being from the association with the 'other' - A derived result. It is similar to how the dog thought the ringing of the bell was what gave it food and how we believe the white rose to be as beautiful as the glittering pearl.

We prefer not to accept the natural existence of what already is and instead prefer to impose our own ideas and bring our own ideational or conceptual existence into it. This is how a simple natural happening is personalised.

Employing this acquiring tendency by the associative process and its reflex conditioning hampers Man's natural health, his individual domain. All the instances described below are in relation to the health aspect of Man. Of course this is not to exclude all the other dimensions that deteriorate under the weight of these factors. The decline has definitely penetrated through all walks of life such as strong Consumerism, which results in severe imbalance and Cutthroat Competitiveness, Environmental Destructions and a horrifying rise in Addictions of all kinds. Not to leave out growing Terrorism...

To touch upon each of these lies beyond the scope of this book.

We have taken Obesity as an example of the Individual domain.

Obesity is not a natural state of health. It is a derived result arising from several simultaneous, conflicting reactions on the part of the individual. The persuasive nature of post-modernism has over powered and swayed the inherent discrimination gifted by Nature to all humanity. Continually ignoring natural wisdom, shirking away simplicity in exchange for 'more' and 'better' and then 'more' again, has only led to a deeper sense of deprivation. It is an arbitrary settlement for pseudo satisfaction using a substituting approach - A

game of cover-up or masking. Unnatural and insensitive eating habits devoid of discrimination, in order to replace the lack of nourishment in love and care have lead to obesity becoming a commonly growing disease. The body-mind weigh heavy with acquired conditioning.

...Then Fasting...

Then again, today's world sees fitness-oriented people who choose fasting as a method of weight reduction. This may have worked for a few, but for many it results in aggravating the condition and reversing the result aimed at.

I encountered many such cases, in relation to obesity. From all the patients treated, I noticed a common factor in all. His or her intake of food was highly irregular and no routine or regime was ever followed. To this I suggested they incorporate a basic change in their daily lifestyle. I first asked them to eat their meals at regular times. Moreover, I cautioned them that in case, for any reason if they missed the allotted time for their meal they should try and skip that meal altogether and eat at the next allotted mealtime.

What happens within the body when the food intake is inconsistent, delayed and irregular is that the brain responds by sending a message to the body to hold on and store the nutrients coming from the food. Brain sends out this message as the body is never sure when it will receive food. So, whenever food is eaten, the body holds onto the nourishment and stores it.

The conditioned memory of starvation in the brain changes into a signal of storage as a protective measure. This sort of reaction from the body comes only after a prolonged irregular habit. And the conditioned functioning of the brain cannot be broken and changed back so easily.

This is another example that reinstates the conditioning feature.

If an individual habitually consuming large quantities of meat suddenly starts eating small vegetarian meals, he would surely suffer from acid related disorders such as acid eructation, bilious headaches and ulcers etc.

If the change in diet seems positive at some level what causes such adverse reactions in the body? The reason is past conditioning. Because of habitually large meals the brain grows conditioned to command the secretion and release of the necessary amount of bile needed for the digestion of the expected food. When there is a sudden or unexpected change in dietary habits, (eating less and lighter varieties of food etc.) the brain cannot immediately and instantly register it. It continues to command the usual quantity of bile to be released for digestion as it is habitually accustomed to.

The excess bile is what led to acidity based diseases.

What and how we live for prolonged durations, all turns into our conditioning. Of course, there is no harm in changing or breaking any conditioning. But what needs to be highlighted is for us to first understand the nature of how we have actually programmed ourselves, as it unfolds a deeper insight. This insight shows the need for us to use a suitable and gradual approach to bring any kind of change or shift in our deep-rooted conditioning. A rash and impulsive approach to make an overnight change naturally triggers an equally harsh reaction because of an ignorantly broken conditioning.

The food we eat influences our body and mind. All the six tastes nourish our body and even the ego is nurtured through its identification with the body and the influence of the six tastes. Therefore, any kind of food conditioning is in deep interconnectedness to ones egoism or mind-set. When a conditioning is abruptly broken, there is an obvious and angry revolt from the ego - we know it as 'withdrawal symptoms'.



Diseases don't fall into our bodies from the skies... we create them.

We create them by insensitive lifestyles, food habits and erratic perceptions. We bring diseases upon ourselves by our conditioned lifestyle, rash approaches and its reversed reflex results. Let us see one more instance.

A long time smoker's throat and lungs eventually become desensitised. This suppressing insensitive act affects his breathing channels. As a reaction the, breathing channels eventually come to revolt and demand attention by increasing the growth of cells in its area. Eventually, a smoker will have to pay the price for his long-term ignored consideration of the call of the affected channels. In this way the affected part, starts creating its own localised territory to demand its identity.

Whenever we thoughtlessly ignore a living part of our body and suppress it, it starts longing for its identity and to fulfil this it generates an abnormal growth in cells. This is how it tries to prove its authority and creates its own localised ego. What we call Cancer.

Repeatedly ignoring the calls of our body, the symptoms eventually turn into a burst of cancerous cells. So far, if we have determined the individual's own lifestyle conditioning to be the personal cause of cancer, then part of the cause can also be ascribed to be rooted in the collective level.



SOCIAL DOMAIN

Our social domain is the external participant; a factor equally influencing the dimensions of our life.

We now discuss all the acquiring we do by accepting what our social structures have to offer from their collective level.

It is true that diseases result from psychological causes, but not all. A major cause of cancer has also been found to be due to adulterated foods, crops, and vegetables cultivated by chemical fertilisers. These are the two influencing factors for the spread of cancer at a collective level. Another area born from similar collective factors like adulterated foods etc, are many layers of stress. We have already dealt with this topic and the remedies for it in the earlier section.

We do find people following fitness programmes; Yoga, Meditation and Tai Chi etc to reduce stress levels and these programmes largely help only our nervous system. But, our glandular system remains untouched even after our apparent short-lived pursuits and efforts. This is so because the function of our glandular system depends predominantly on food. Therefore the intake of chemically fertilised food, processed junk foods and chemically prepared allopathic drugs are the vital causes for the birth of many disorders in the glandular system of our body.

The disadvantage of 'Fast-food' lies in the fact that they are put through procedures of wax coverings or are blended with chemical preservatives.

Regrettably, we are not sensitive enough to refuse these foods and instead rather proudly prefer to belong to the fast paced post-modern techno world.

Over time, we lose touch of our inherent sensitivity by forgetting to feel our body all because our attention lies entangled with other things. If we do remain sensitive enough to sense the real needs of our body then we would naturally not accept these kinds of foods. As a result of taking junk food sooner or later our ignored body rebels and gets sick. Our body, through sickness and pain demands our attention just so the cravings of our conditioned mind can be shattered or dissolved.

Have you ever noticed the flexible mind-attitude of people who are sick or in real pain? It is a de-conditioning process offered directly by Nature. Regrettably, a cry of desperation seems to be the only one working solution for post-modern life style. Due to the insensitivity with which we eat the body is forced to alarm us, but only to make us more insightful. But, sadly enough, too many alarms end irrevocable or final. We pay a price, which at times is as much as giving up our life force or losing our intelligence.

Moving on from the fast food industry let us glance at the flourishing techno-pharmacies.

Techno-pharmacies are happily manufacturing artificial painkillers, anti-biotic, tranquillisers and sleeping pills - all of which make Man even more mechanical and chemical.

All the healing resources this industry is attempting to capsule are already generated naturally and released by our own living body. Why then do we still opt to depend on techno pharmacies and turn our body into a factory of chemicals?

There has also been a great deterioration of natural habitat due to pollution etc and today's age is met with a rising scarcity in the growth of natural herbs. This brings me to another lurking scarcity - Genuine Native Healers. Unfortunately, what the market offers are several half-baked healers. Today's preoccupied people are not even able to make time for the detailed questions asked by a thorough and authentic homeopath/ healer.

All of these issues are collectively influencing the choices we make, indirectly and/or directly and we continue to support artificial chemical drugs.



Unfortunately the hypothesis of advanced medical science and its range of operations are built on an obsessive fear of death and suffering - a highly pessimistic outlook to life and humanity - is it not? The modern medicinal system obtains its knowledge by testing autopsies, examining tissue and slides

under microscopes, analysing blood, urine and other isolated by-products of the body.

Ironically, their knowledge of anatomy of living beings is learnt from a dead one!

Most of their knowledge has evolved on the basis of death and disease, not life and healing. And most experimental tests are conducted on animals. In today's age, health is managed more through hospitals than by rehabilitating health farms. The genuine purpose of health insurance is prevention or health care, but today it has turned into a paying business proposition. It has become a financial compensation for treatment after falling ill, instead of before.



Another popular uproar in the Allopathic segment is the criticism pointed towards the Ayurveda, Siddha and the Unani medicinal systems for their use of metals and mercury. Contrary to their criticism, just recently there was an article in the 'New Scientist Magazine' dated May 30th 2006, about the use of mercury as vaccines. The article clearly declares vaccines to have turned into poison due to an adverse amount of mercury content which has lead to juvenile diseases like Autism, asthma, diabetes etc. There are even some common flu vaccines found to be containing levels of mercury, which prove *hundreds of times* more toxic than *hazardous waste*.

The age-old healing Systems utilise such substances for medicinal use only after a thorough extended purification process. Today, human bodies, under the tag of vaccines are being toxinated and the world has no clue of the number of vaccine-toxinated bodies that walk the earth today. What is the allopathic reply to this and to the drastic side effects that subsequently emerge?

Let us move to yet another popular propaganda...

...our modern day health industry goes by the definition that health can be found within the numerals of calories and nutrients. They have reduced such a complex living phenomenon our human body - to numbers, caloric counts and ratios of age-height and weight measures.

We have entirely missed to see the, interlink between Life and Health.

All of us have seen calorie charts and how they are publicised for their apparent benefits. These dietary tables state the amount of vitamins, minerals and protein a man and woman should receive each day. One such table states an average person should have an intake of 3000 calories per day. Another one states it is advisable to eat 11 calories per day, per pound of weight just to meet the basic metabolic needs and then increase according to the demand of work, i.e. if engaged in heavy work. But in neither of them is there a specific mention of the ratio between the calories of carbohydrate,

fat or proteins. Take carbohydrates for example. Should they be taken cooked or uncooked, refined or unrefined, processed or unprocessed? And what should be the ratio between the calories and the nutrient density?

WE LACK ANSWERS!

But then again maybe we would be handed over nothing more than a new bunch of tabulated numbers! This is also one of the many conditionings we have individually acquired and, is collectively imposed.

Should we even dare to imagine how far we have gone from Nature, distanced by the weighing multitudes of conditioning and accepted imagery in the inherent continuum of Body-Mind-Spirit?

Thousands of research papers are written each year, declaring the importance of the intake of vitamins, proteins and minerals. Without a wholistic intelligence in the metabolic process of the human body, the prescribed specific quantities and an excess intake of single supplements can easily impair damage and interfere in the natural metabolic process. It is not easily fathomable, precisely when the body utilises its own reserves and when it draws from food.

Life is confined to time schedules!

With Life confined to time schedules, Man is compelled to ignore any instinctive message that his body may send out. This way, ones own instinctive messages are ignored and forsaken in order to meet the growing demands of ones own assembled lifestyle. He pins down his life to the reference of a machine, the clock.

Several diseases have spurted owing to the imposing time factor conditioning. Hypertension, panic attack's, headaches, acidity, psychiatric disorders and other stress related disorders are extremely common complaints of today.

Appetite or Pseudo Appetite

Whether one is hungry or not he has to take his meal regularly.

Or often people are seen 'popping pills' to cope with the demands of the day. 'Instant relief' medicines! These are heavily promoted even by the media through commercials and are a popular part of a common mans medicine kit. People accept these medicines mainly for their 'instant effectivity'. Regrettably, the common man has no inkling to what rash and habitual intake of such medication is doing to him at all levels. Under the very same mode, physicians and doctors have taken up the easy use of steroids for even quicker relief from common ailments and complaints.

And all of this just so Man can forget, overlook and bypass resting his body and get back to work. But people are unaware of what this does. This sort of programmed conditioning first and foremost over rides the body-intelligence

from doing its natural healing work. Secondly, it assaults the hormonal functioning of the body. So, even when the body sends off urgent alarms, it is being pushed beyond its natural capacity, the alarm is simply shut off by popping in some artificial substitute.

The much-needed preliminary step is for this acquiring conditioning to be dropped in order to understand and live as one's existential nature.

The glamorous and sensational techno advances of media like TV is yet another heavily contagious persuasion. Uncensored exposure to the world at an alarmingly early age has already contaminated pure young minds with improper perceptions, violent notions and straying ideology. Such an early contamination of the mind only multiplies as it grows and if you go to see, it grows towards what - A further deterioration in lifestyle?

Another dire impact dealt out by the onset of new age stimuli are also borne by young growing minds. It is the inception of premature sexual activities. As per the Indian Samskaras or primal archetypes, this aspect of life for the Indian psyche does not bloom until the mind and body are not groomed in readiness by Existence. But the indiscriminate speed of social structures have liberally crossed over natural boundaries and brought in a growing rate in illicit relationships, pre-marital pregnancies, child pregnancies and divorces and along with this a hoard of physical and psychological disorders.

The family values have been shaken and chastity is seen as an outdated notion!

Any sort of early exposure speeds up the nature of the mind and the individual by middle age is already filled with boredom and yet incomplete. But the speed with which he has travelled his life so far is unrelenting and continues to lead. He ends up crossing over his already experienced conservative life and going on to explore the un-conservative dimensions in search of thrill and satisfaction - homosexuality and other perversions are instances of these.

Under the need to belong to the fast-paced techno world, we have indiscriminately taken whatsoever society offered:

We feed our children junk food.

We live on painkillers and sleeping pills just so we can cope the next day.

We buy health insurance for when we get sick.

We live in fear of disease so we vaccinate ourselves.

In the name of health, we turn mentally obsessed with calorie charts.

Under the banner of time-management, we become confined to taking food as per the hands of the clock.

And in order to play the role of the post-modern man we are hungry for more and more acquisition.

Last but not the least, we turn a blind eye to the increasing deterioration of human nature in the name of keeping pace with the moving world.

Is this not an increasing insensitivity towards ourselves and towards our own biological wisdom can we not call this as ignoring the 'life call' from within us?

So, let us pause for a moment and ask - What is Health?

Health is a spontaneous, dynamic, nurturing pulsation at every moment. Rejuvenating trillions of cells in a human body, our healing intelligence resides somewhere in this amazing complexity. The human body has its own Native Intelligence. At any given moment the number of activities, being so well coordinated and integrated within our bodies are quite infinite.

Come to think of it, until one doesn't suffer a headache, one doesn't really think about his head and life moves smoothly. But when one suffers a headache, he finds his life is hindered. No doubt, Life and Health appear inter-linked - if one is affected, the other suffers damage too.

Even though on the surface of it all they appear interlinked, in actuality, at the core, they are both One.

Governed by the existentially given, dynamic wondrous intelligence of life, within and around the cell, Health becomes Life itself! As long as life exists health flourishes. If living is the capacity to heal then health is inherent and natural. Anything existential is spontaneous and has its own dynamism. So all there is to do is to allow the potency of spontaneity to flow.

If one truly understands his own body he will know this living body is the most ideal pharmacy ever organised. Using its inherent intelligence the living body produces the necessary healing resources in required optimum levels, in right dosage, at appropriate times, and miraculously all of it is devoid of side effects.

Life has gifted us this inherent possibility to tune into the natural law all by living in an existential mode.

The Ancient songs of the Indian medicinal systems expound the human body to inherently know the art of extracting minerals, vitamins and salts from the food we consume. Apparently, few pay heed to this truth because they are more involved in obsessive talks and issues about the consumption of vitamins and supplements. And people seem to invest, research, manufacture, and consume what already exists within.

In connection to this paradox, Man is ignorant of another bodily truth. The human body has a specific and limited capacity of storing and utilising vitamins

as with any other substance. So what happens when an excess of external vitamins are consumed? The overloaded body is forced to temporarily dump this excess somewhere in the organism or eliminate it. This in itself is an added task for the body to accomplish. To accomplish it the body has to stimulate the dumping process, which gets activated by a response from the nervous system. It shifts the body into an agitated boost up mode - stepping up the metabolic activity. Funnily enough, this stimulation is what makes the vitamin consumer feel good. And for the same insensitive reason the need for this sort of stimulation becomes habitual. Soon it turns into a chronic addiction. What happens when its consumption is stopped? The body obviously undergoes a feeling of deprivation and sinks to an unexpected and fast felt low in well being. Please understand, this is not a disease. It is a reaction resulting from the conditioning you yourself created in the body and mind. An indiscriminate consumption of vitamins, mineral supplements disturb the intrinsic balancing function of internal intelligence.

All supplements are nothing but pseudo nutrition.

When we take organic food, fruits, vegetables, nuts, sprouts the body recognises it and takes the necessary time to chew, digest and absorb the nutrients within. All organs within the body, function in an integrated and rhythmic process. But the food we eat today barely contains the natural enzymes responsible for strengthening the endocrine glands and the hormones in it. This is why we feel the need to initiate the intake of external vitamins and supplements.

What happens when we consume unnatural, readymade, vitamins and mineral supplements? By introducing these nutrients in their direct form into our body, it bypasses many of the vital and necessary processes and doesn't allow other organs enough time to co-operate. Neither does it allow the working, functioning and natural emergence of the human body's inherent potential and intelligence.

By and by, the inherent intelligence is rendered unused and impotent. The body will just consider the direct arrival of readymade supplements as an over load and will go into an experience of internal stress. This stress sends out panic signals to the rest of the body and sooner or later leads to other complexities in our natural health.



INTELLIGENT BODY

I have come across certain elusive observations that explicitly prove how the inherent body-intelligence works.

I have observed a single common fact co-relating several cases of prolonged bacterial infections. All the patients were invariably anaemic! Why were cases

of bacterial infections also reporting to be anaemic?

Interestingly, this is the doing of the bodily-intelligence! The human body, as a protective measure, withdraws an amount of iron-content from the circulatory system and stores it by transforming it into other tissues (Thathus). Why? The human body intelligence is already aware of the fact that bacteria can multiply more in an abundance of iron!

This is a simple example of the optimal function of the body's inherent intelligence. It converts the abundance of iron into tissues, which results in anaemia, but in doing so, it withdraws the medium that supports the spread of this infection. It is a pseudo anaemia created by the body. In this situation, an allopathic doctor runs a blood test on the patient and prescribes Iron! What would happen?

As discussed earlier, the Siddha System of Medicine doesn't believe in giving isolated importance to the infection itself. Instead, it concentrates on the types of bodily circumstances and physical situations the infection has used for its ground, taken birth in and grown. So, the Siddha way of healing and curing is done by eliminating the supporting structure of the ailment; the deranged bio-regulating force. In other words the root causative imbalance that contributed as the circumstance and in the building up of the disease, itself is treated.

Clearly, the Siddha medicinal system teaches that the body itself has the inherent intelligence to perform all the functions that medicines claim to. Therefore, Siddha treatment is administered in a distinctive way - to act as an accelerating and accentuating factor, never over-riding the intrinsic healing of the body.

For instance, from my experience I found many phlegmatic diseases are caused due to heat in the body and not cold as commonly misunderstood. Especially, in cases of tropical countries the common symptoms of these diseases are running nose, Eosinophilia, recurrent sneezing, allergic Rhinitis, fever etc.

As an example let us take a case of persistent or frequent runny nose, particularly for a Vatha or Pitta dominant individual.

When I checked their pulse, I found an over accumulation of stale heat in the lower abdomen, particularly in the urinary tract area. We know cool energy by nature travels downwards and heat energy travels upwards. When someone consumes food that holds cooling properties or if someone takes a cold shower immediately on waking, the heat in the lower abdomen evaporates the cool energy and much of the phlegm starts collecting in the upper region of the body while it evaporates by the heat. In such a case, the body begins to eliminate the accumulating phlegm by a runny nose or sneezing or by a fever combined with a cold. This heat accumulation can happen even due to

sexual intercourse. This is the explanation for the common English phrase, 'honeymoon sneezing'.

This process happens in and through the nadis connecting the urinary tract area to the nasal cavities, by way of reverse osmosis.

In such cases, the stagnated heat must be eliminated through frequent urination. The simple remedy of drinking warm water works in cooling the body. It flushes out the unwanted and excess heat through the urine. A very ordinary and natural instance of this is our experience of frequent urination in rainy seasons or cold climates, as it is the only appropriate and possible process of heat elimination from the body in that weather condition.

In the case of a pitta dominant person suffering from bilious discomforts with symptoms of vomiting or sudden diarrhoea: It is also the body's way of eliminating the excess Pitta or heat.

These symptoms, most of the times are mistaken as signs of disease or sickness. But it is nothing but a natural cleansing process the body has undertaken. If we immediately start with allopathic medications to check the diarrhoea without totally considering the root cause, we are only making our body open to skin diseases such as severe itching, red heat rashes etc. Our body knows how to eliminate disease-causing factors and how to recreate the lost balance. But we are unaware of these secrets our body holds.

The point to be conveyed here is for one to apply their understanding and discrimination before medicating the body. Our body is communicative and intelligent. Siddha, Ayurveda and other natural medicinal systems formulate their diagnosis, prognosis and line of treatment, based on a nature of in-depth understanding and even take into consideration the psychic temperament of the individual in order to re-establish the body-mind-spirit back into its unanimous and integrated working.

COMPENSATING PROCESS

As for the compensating process of the body whereby the human body does not suffer the lack of any chemical and its functionality due to deficiency, the body intelligence secretes each chemical in two or more than two places within the body as a standby in emergency.

For instance, a major percentage of erythro protein is produced in the kidneys. In circumstances of less oxygen in the blood, this chemical reaches the bone marrow Thathu and the formation of blood starts from there. In case, both kidneys do not function in their optimum level, then the liver too can produce this chemical.

Not only chemicals but also all causative bio factors are created in this wholistic way by the intelligent body. It is on this standing that the ancient Siddhas

founded the Varma system. In case one gland is weak in its function, the remaining glands can be activated by the Varma principle and the wholistic balance of the body can be regained. This intelligence works through the Prana in the body. That is why healing systems such as Varma, Yoga and Tantra of the Siddhas hold the working knowledge and significant insights of this fundamental pulsation, the effervescence of Prana, high in importance.

The human body is a nexus of multi participants in a continuum of each other.



Last but not the least we have heard reports of the spontaneous regression of cancer from its earliest stages. Till now modern medicine cannot say how! Uncanny AIDS reports have also been recorded which are still puzzling the doctors; instances that cannot be accounted by the research of Medical science.

The knowledge of what took place within the body remains with the body.

The Living system of a human body is a symbiotic integrated process, with everything happening at once, with each process in perfect co-relation and support of each other. Nourishment is Nature's way of making a relationship and awakening the inherent connectedness of human bio-system into the fundamental manifestation of life. Analytical data, computations etc prescribed by modern mechanical research are incapable of comprehending even a hint of this 'living relationship'. Nourishment is a living phenomenon in which one life form gives up its life and is transformed into another life form.

Leave the body alone in its own way. Giving the body its rightful place is true transcendence of the body. Responsibility is the ability to respond. Man has an individual and social responsibility to restore his personal and collective Universe into a state of harmony. Life by its very movement is always calling us to engage in its flow and be alive. One begins to respond to this 'life calling' by taking responsibility to live in this connectedness anywhere within the continuum called Life.

The Ones who illustrate harmony and expanded living from responding to this life-call are not us - the post-modern social citizens - but the simple Tribes of the mountains. Ironic isn't it?

I have seen tribal people living in mountains. They have faculties that sense oncoming natural events. Their basic sensitivity towards Existence is unbelievably extended and deep. They sense evident rainfall or an approaching wild animal before it comes to a physical confrontation. They even have the intrinsic ability to chase away a snake without harming it, or drive away harmful and poisonous insects, bees etc by emitting certain sounds. These incidents and experiences are not common to the urban man.

On the contrary, urban understanding gets fascinated by these sorts of things and calls it miraculous feats and faculties! But, for the tribal man this is his ordinary day-to-day life.

What makes this difference? How does a tribal have these faculties?

For his survival! From within him these faculties arose in response to his existential conditioning; because, he lives in self-referral and depends upon himself for his survival. He lives a life free of conflict with his surroundings. Unlike us, he doesn't imbibe and carry much of the acquired conditioning imposed by mechanical social structures.

So, only when one lives, in his existential conditioning do the hidden latent faculties, his inherent potential, emerge as authentic living.

With the passage of time, we Indians are growing more and more inclined towards the modern medicinal system and westerners towards oriental systems of medicinal healing. Indians believe that ancient healing systems like Ayurveda and Siddha are outdated as they lack scientific evidence and data. When Indians picked up technological advances from other countries and speedily nurtured them here in India they also picked chemotherapy, diet supplements etc and brought them home in hope of implementing them as new age solutions. They chose to ignore the simple Truth that not even a hundred years ago we Indians survived on our own ancient medicinal and healing values.

These instances have been put together not as criticism but with the intention to draw our attention to the kinds of imposing influences we are imbibing into our life. Because, everything we allow ourselves to be influenced by acts as a life-shaping factor we must be aware of this. Today's common man is intentionally and conveniently kept in the dark about the hidden agendas carried out behind specialised sectors. Underlying intentions have grown dark enough to camouflage truth in pursuit of selfish interests and gains. Such intentions overpower and impose themselves at individual as well as collective levels by penetrating into each and every home and each and every mind. This is why, each individual needs to be reminded with urgency of being more aware of the choices he makes as these are indirectly and directly the acting governing principles of his life. Collectively, they contribute to a weak and unhealthy social structure.

So far, we described Man in the post modernism era with relation to his individual and social domain. Now see how both reflect in his mind and energy levels in daily life.



MECHANICAL PATTERN OF MIND IN DAILY LIFE

Ever since life turned into a battlefield of conflict, 'Work' in day to day life began to be considered the opposite of 'Play'. But, is there a difference between Work and Play? Both involve action! The term 'Work' makes man time-conscious and self-conscious; and the term 'Play' leads to a forgetfulness of ones self-obsession.

Work brings conformity to a regular pattern of activity, contained in a certain period of time and attached with specific rules and norms into our daily life. It is possible this conformity can eventually make us feel compelled and bound as it implies restriction in movement and activities, we end up dull, and monotonous pushed into living a Mechanical Pattern of life.

In reaction to this imposition of Work comes a persistent inner demand for a release from it. We seek it through forms of recreation, entertainment, excitement or thrill, drinking etc - a time-being escape from self-obsession.

Either way, activity is necessary for making living possible! Life is movement itself; a network of relationships based on action. But we went ahead and restricted action to a self-motivated activity, and called it 'Work'. We modified Life and natural action! But, how?

Action is movement in relationship.

When movement is restricted by a quantitative approach for increasing efficiency and productivity in the pursuit of 'more', it splits natural action into Work and Play or Confinement and Release. This makes 'Work' a repetitive, compulsive action that is mechanical and completely uncreative. These actions also make the mind uncreative. Some may argue claiming work to be productive, but if it is not creative, it turns into nothing more than a psychological and social fixation.

How does this actually happen?

Action gives an experience.

A joyful experience when identified with the sensation of joy gives birth to the desire for 'more'. Identification with the joy flowing from creative action crystallises into a goal or ideal and turns into an ego-centre. The desire to achieve 'more' is a drive for ego-expansion. In other words, the drive for more egoic expansion can be held responsible for the games we play to acquire false images. It is the factor triggering ruthless competition and perverted multiple personalities in human beings today. Action gets degraded into a self-perpetuated activity!

In a nutshell, the crux of the problem is: action, in an acquisitive and restrictive mode, within a social structure gets modified, multiplies and perpetuates itself, forming mechanical patterns.

The solution lies in freeing action from the restrictions imposed by ego-consciousness and not in giving up action itself.

ACTION AS IT IS...

Action that emerges from the core of life and love of the heart is Creative. Creative action implies no time, no fragmentary mind and no division. Creative action is wholesome and is its own means as well as its own end; being creative, it looks for no reward as it is complete and incomparable in itself. Creative action need not mean only artistic work like poetry, painting, sculpting etc. Creative action is the essence emerging from the immediate perception of the Whole, the unanimity of all life. It is that which does not proceed from self-motive and so, is free from the expectation of the outcome. Creative work is spontaneous and unconditional!

To realise this, Mindfulness is the key.

WHOLENESS OF LIFE

To realise one's unconditional nature one's conditioned state needs to be first de-conditioned; the conditioned state being the acquired conditioning - the overload of everything gathered along the course of life. The de-conditioning of these inessentials constructively introduces one to an Existential conditioning, in a refined way. These existential imperatives are one's natural qualities and potentials. Ultimately, after this, one goes beyond the state of existential conditioning to the *unconditional level*.

These are the two approaches a Siddha Master uses. First is the de-conditioning of the inessential natures and grounding by a process of Existential conditioning. Then from the existential conditioning does the unconditional nature ultimately flower!

REALISING ENERGY PHENOMENA

Siddha Sage Valmiki says,

“Varuvathilum povathilum manathai vai.”

Translation:

“Keep the attention of your mind in that which comes and goes”.

Siddha practitioners obsessive in breathing methods interpret the above verse as “Put your attention on the incoming and outgoing breath”. But I would call this is a limited perception. The states of mind and the moods of human beings are in constant flux. If one wishes to realise the nature of life force, one must perceive, both externally and internally, the cyclic phenomena of Energy Acquisition, Conservation and Depletion.

ENERGY SPENDING...

For example, I have seen the attitude of many smokers. After several smokes, they feel the need for energy so they eat. On eating, they experience a sudden rise it is a high-level of unassimilated energy. In reaction to this un-conserved energy, they instantly use a cathartic approach and smoke again!

It is a highly insensitive approach and in due course fuels a meaningless attitude; a meaningless attitude leads to a meaningless life; because any attitude spreads and reflects itself throughout all dimensions of our life.

If one isn't sensitive to the phenomenon of energy conservation and its significance, this smokers' attitude stands applicable to all.

We often lose our equanimity and peace of mind over trifles and get irked at the state of things around us or in society. We believe everything is wrong. Giving vent to this anger we dissipate our energies, but do we do anything concrete and constructive, that is of real help to society?

Some quantity of energy is dissipated or spent with even a single thought arising in our mind and travelling outward. To think we suffer a million thoughts and agitations every minute!

Similarly, we are constantly squandering energy in a million different directions. We forget we are perhaps equally responsible for the chaos in the world as the others. Yet, we do not try to first set right ourselves; instead, we complain about others. All we are doing is rashly dissipating energy that is generated and conserved, without realising that unless it is aptly directed and channelised, the consequences are catastrophic.

We have already read earlier of how our energy levels can be stimulated. For instance, when we hear of our promotion or when we receive a large sum of money etc, our activities suddenly become full of energy. The promotion at work or the receipt of a lot of money, are symbolical carriers of energy in relative human terms. But what is vital here is to observe exactly how you deal with this sudden elevation of energy within. Because this determines whether the energy will be conserved or suddenly depleted.

A noticeable number of people act cathartically and completely deplete the energy. They tend to engage deeper in addictions such as drinking, boasting and bragging or even take it a step further and send subtle and cunning hints to his opponents or competitors...

Although the cited example may sound normal at a day to day level but consider the implications if this very approach rises from an individualistic level into mass level. What happens when a freshly elected minister in the political arena reaches a powerful and authoritative stand! If such an individual is given a power position, he will carry out all sorts of immediate and impulsive

reactions and call them his decisions! Will this not affect our entire social order?

These instances clearly indicate that Man is truly not aware of his energy-dissipating tendencies that arise in reaction to a sudden accumulation of energy. Three factors are responsible for this.

Firstly, he may not have a firm grounding within himself.

Secondly, he may be completely unaware of the phenomenon of energy conservation.

And the final reason is the combined outcome of being unaware of the above two reasons.

The crystallisation of a firm ground from the energy conservation happens through meaningful living. This is the ground from where all actions are to be channelised and energies to be integrated. Neither of these is nurtured with awareness in today's individuals.



PRIORITY LIST _ SWEEPED OUT FROM UNDER!

“One day, in my teenage years, a friend was expecting to receive a sum of money. He decided that after he would receive the Rs. 1000/- , he would join a computer course. I heard the money had come. I happened to visit him soon after that and found him listening to a melodious song on a newly purchased tape recorder!

He said he purchased it for Rs. 600/-. It was from the money he had received. The balance Rs.400/- was still with him. And he had a plan for getting back the Rs.600/- he had used up. He was expecting to receive cash gifts from relatives on his upcoming birthday.

But, I already knew he would sooner or later purchase something else. The tape recorder had been first on his priority list all along, much before the computer course. Ironically, he wasn't aware of his real priority list nor was I.”

We all keep a priority list; a list we think we know. But, we don't. We don't even know the first of it or its associated energy levels - it lies hidden from ordinary awareness. Our real priorities are directly connected to their associated energy levels and reveal only when we come into an experience of that specific state of energy. Until such time, they remain dormant and hidden away.

Prior to receiving the expected sum of money, my friend had taken an apparent decision. But, actually receiving the money had its own energy level, which

brought a definite shift in the associated energy level within him. This shift altered his original apparent decision of a computer course and brought into view his actual but hidden priority a tape recorder.

Our latent hidden desires are interlinked with their corresponding energy levels. In truth our relationship with all materials or forms are entirely based on energy. A high level of energy can sweep out from below or uproot the most deep-rooted desires and urge one to fulfil them in an impulsive manner.

Human life involves energy-spending to fulfil its purpose of survival but the criterion is how it expresses its spending nature - constructively or destructively? An entire loaf of bread cannot be eaten all at once. Either we spill it, vomit, choke or even fall ill. But if we eat one mouthful at a time it is possible to eat an entire loaf, digest it and assimilate it into our body. Likewise, energy conservation can also be done.



CONSERVING THE ENERGY

The Siddhas have mentioned two major ways for the conservation of energy. The first by consciously and gradually gaining familiarity with the different modes of energy related to different aspects and activities of life. This is done by consciously attuning to the different energy spectrums experienced in day to day activities and incidents. Certain practices are also of help in the conservation of energy. As we earlier read in the Varma Chapter, the meditative stances make one aware of ones present level of energy and how it fluctuates depending upon the energy of influencing factors.

From my own experience, I have found the method of deep belly breathing to be of benefit and recommend the same. It brings, 'grounding' in oneself by balancing the position of the solar plexus and is an efficient method for the conservation of energy. If the method of deep belly breathing is practiced over a long period of time not only does it enhance the digestion process at the physical level but also creates a psychic ability to assimilate and recover from the strong impacts of unexpected events.

The second approach for energy conservation mentioned by the Siddhas is the path of discrimination. This method is what we call, 'being aware of ones latent tendencies and the transient nature of the world'. It is a self-referral attitude, which keeps our energy level free from the dependency factor. A practitioner of this method lives with an attitude of crystal clear understanding and all his activities get channelised with an attitude that is cohesive and flowing in strength. The umbrella of a cohesive and strong attitude holds under it the whole flow and expression of life energy - both assimilation and conservation. The River of Life flows guided between the banks of this attitude.

Meaningful actions strengthen and enrich our vitality. And the inspiration derived from a trusting attitude to life is to be conserved, enriched and strengthened by cultivating and nurturing it through living the right values of life.



MINDFULNESS

For us to de-condition the inessentials within ourself we first have to become aware of our multiple false 'I's and Images. And for uncovering this we need the attitude of 'Mindfulness'. Mindfulness implies...

...'being fully present in what we are engaged in, leaving nothing out to be fragmented by dwelling on masquerades'.

And it is attained by using the quality of 'non-grasping awareness' an awareness that pulls at nothing from the flow of life.

Mindfulness entails being wholly involved and open in what we are or in what we are doing in the moment. Mindfulness must not be misunderstood to represent being a mere watcher or onlooker. It is about being an active, present and full participant, whether we are involved in any activity or not.

In fact there lays a distinct motive in Man to constantly avoid his instinctive nature and foretelling sensitivity under the fear of confronting something he rather not see and acknowledge about himself. Mindfulness is a wholehearted dive into oneself; within ones mind; ones body and emotions in a way that there is nothing or nobody left to see. There is no 'watcher'; no fragmentary self-conscious personality of split mind.

Only in such mindfulness are we fully present to ourselves, to what we are doing, and can feel the hidden significance even in the smallest of things - naturally it gives meaning to our actions!

Another outcome is, all the external, demanding and fragmentary stimuli that impose multiple pseudo personalities gradually thin down, leaving one's perception clearer and clearer. Ultimately, one's sensitivity itself functions as perception.

The 'Letting go' process is a natural offshoot of mindfulness.

Letting-go all unnecessary identifications comes with no effort. They just dwindle and diminish as a by-product of mindful-living. The sum mum bonum of mindfulness is that one eventually comes to realise his thoughts and emotions to be not as solid, heavy or real as earlier imagined, but a nexus of fluid energy patterns.

Following a habitual, dependent and associative imagery attitude scatters the fluid energy patterns into a multi-fold of fragmentary patterns, in association with corresponding images. But through the realisation of fluid energy to be the basis, we come to understand that mindfulness is not mere watching or observing but being what we are doing. Mindfulness is being in the linking drift where the watcher and watched vanishes; where the subject and the personalised object disappear. Then, naturally we see the wholeness of life; we understand we cannot separate anything and, everything is inherently interconnected - already inter-related. The reason we have missed sensing this interconnectedness is due to our splitting tendency.

Living deeply with this attitude one experiences an inner openness within oneself that simply lets everything come and lets everything go.



This was an over view of the journey. Now we venture into the inner experience of imbibing mindfulness into ones daily life.

Holding an intensive and genuine attitude of mindfulness, as our initial experience we penetrate right into a direct experience of the nature of acquisition and see its grasping quality. The existing discomfort then dissolves in the light of receptivity and openness of seeing it clearly and closely. This happens by holding a mindful-approach and by letting go of the acquisition and suffocation; we allow our perceptive sensitivity to arise. Then, by humbly letting-go of everything - not by force, nor by suppressing it, but by simply keeping a *perceptive sensitivity* of the contents to be a passing show - a process and flow - we become fully present to the whole of our experience and a natural openness unfolds.

So, to nurture a mind that clings to nothing is the path to wisdom. In the spaciousness of 'mindful letting-go', arises a natural grounding.

In the words of Siddha Valmiki - putting ones attention in that which comes and goes; this is the mindfulness he speaks of.

When we shed our-self of a false image and drop into the awareness of what is being felt, we awaken to the falsity of the conditioning and come to recognise what we truly need. This opens further and deeper as we learn to read ourselves and listen deeply to how we respond to all that is coming our way as Life.

When the grasping and personalisation of these imagined and acquired selves' dies, then the false 'I's are no longer potent, nor are they nurtured as ones own. Everything is an impersonal experience; a mere fleeting 'clinging' and ripple in the space of oneself.



GROUNDING

In addition to the factors of conditioning and acquired false 'I's mentioned there is yet another area of conditioning functioning through us. Our Existential Conditioning! And, yes, as the name suggests, it is a conditioning we are inherently born with.

So, even prior to the falsity of ideational conditioning that we acquire, we already have many inherent centres within; such as the survival centre, emotional centre, power oriented centre, feeling centre, creative centre and intelligence centre etc. These function as our existential conditioning. Each of these congenital or inborn centres has its own mental disposition. It can be described as the existential or involuntary expression of the characteristic aspects of the Chakras.

The aspects of any one Chakra predominantly govern each individual. Refining the qualities and features of the predominantly influencing chakra, harnessing that attitude and experiencing it as a whole in every dimension of ones life is the standardisation, grounding and wholesome uniformity expounded as the Yogic way of living.

Invariably all Yogic systems show the way by two features; the de-conditioning and shedding of the acquired and the simultaneous imprinting of grounding. De-conditioning is followed as a discipline right from the intake of food to absolute changes in lifestyle. And grounding is established by undertaking Yogic practices. Both features are implemented simultaneously for the practitioner. The Yogic system is further described in detail in the pages that follow.

I would like to break into a short story here of my younger days...

“Back then, like many, I held a keen interest in the game of cricket. I distinctly recall our Indian team going through phases - highs and lows. My friends and I often wondered why every match was such a struggle for our team, whether they won or lost.

In those times playing against the best teams, our team after playing really hard would lose the match by only a few runs. They always put up a tough fight and no one could tell who would win, until the last minute of the match. On the other hand, in matches with weaker teams where they had to aim for a low score, even though they might have won, they would struggle heavily through the match. Everyone may recall this phase.

No one can decipher the true potential of our team! We can make no standardisation of our own Indian team. Even the players themselves are not sure!

Actually, it is quite simple. The better team should be able to defeat the weaker team with ease. But for us either way, the struggle remained.

The only reason for this could be; we “play as per the strength of the opponent and not as per our own strength”. This is why there is a fluctuating performance. Our players depend on a triggering factor to come from the outside - the opponent. Their spirit lies entangled with the other side.”

Standardisation needs the recognition of ones own strength and the implementation of this inherent potential. This is what seems missing from the players' perspective. 'Grounding' - our players lack. 'Playing by ones own strength, regardless of the opponents strength and position,' only from this ground is uniformity accessible.

I share here two additional occurrences to illuminate the essence of what has been said so far. All of this is applicable to our day-to-day life, both, mundane and spiritual, as both are not different.

“During my short time course of study in the American College of Madurai, I got acquainted with a person named William. He was studying Mathematics, but it was clear he didn't belong to that subject at all. His nature was far from mathematical. So, although, he wasn't really interested, he would still attend all his classes very religiously.

One day during lunch, we sat in the lawns of the college ground. A few students close by opened their lunchboxes and we noticed one of them got disappointed seeing the contents of his lunch. William immediately began to sketch the exact situation. Then on the next page he sketched out a new situation depicting the boy's reaction, if the contents of his lunch had been to his liking.

I was amazed at how spontaneously he had captured and re-picturised the current event. His sketches were witty and carried a clear visualised message. It was his natural gift, a talent that flowed as mere play. But, it was not something easily appreciated by all.

I suggested to William, “Finish your mathematics course even if it be for namesake. And continue to play with this natural ability of sketching. Whatever catches your attention put it to paper. Keep sketching.” He agreed. Two and a half months later, I left the college.

One and a half years later we met again. He was still in the second year of his course. He seemed desperate. He felt highly discouraged by friends and acquaintances because in their opinion his talent to sketch, that he so loved and pursued wasn't going to be of any use to his future at all. Compared to Mathematics, sketching was outdated and had barely any scope in today's modern world. For them, a

doctorate in Mathematics promised a brighter future. Moreover, they had also compelled him into joining computer courses with them, explaining Computers to be the future of the world.

He was nervous when I met him, so I spoke to him strongly and firmly, “don’t give up your sketching! And if you are joining a computer course, choose one related to drawing.” Encouraging him, I added, “If ever you choose any more modernised education courses, make sure it is related to the natural talent you have.” Finally, I told him, “William, what you love, keep doing consistently, other things will follow. When you invest all of your love into your natural abilities, Nature will surely respond.”

We met four years later. By then, William was based in Delhi, working for a big firm dealing in consumer goods throughout India. He explained to me how he came to be in this job!

During the yearly campus interviews for computer students, a few of them organised a small ‘Welcome’ for the visiting interviewers. One of the computer students requested William to draw a welcome picture on behalf of the computer wing. He drew two pictures. One showed the delegates walking towards the campus on a path coming from their Company’s factory. And the other picture showed the entire college building inside the factory grounds and the factory’s name had been renamed to the College name!!

Although his pictures were simple straightforward sketches, what caught the eye of the chief interviewer was the unique combination; a picturisation of the existing scenario and the intelligence of visualising, capturing and depicting the next desirable step.

Although the campus interviews were only for computer students, William got selected for the advertising department of that company!!

I was glad to see that Nature had responded to him!”

William abstained from buckling under peer pressure and accepting the images imposed on him. He didn’t compromise. He remained devoted to his natural talent. This was his grounding. He remained firm in the attitude I had shared with him, to hold onto what you love; to remain with what comes naturally to you and adhere to it consistently in an inspiring way.

That which is alive can never be outdated. Only what is mechanical lays outdated and not in the present.

The next story is an extremely special one, told to me by my Master. A story that penetrated deep into myself!

“Once upon a time, in a small village, lived a cobbler. Daily he would go to a nearby town and sit on roadside corner, spreading his tools

before him. He would sit there quietly. If someone brought their Chappals (sandals) to him for repair, he would do the job without even glancing at them. After he had repaired the Chappals he would accept whatever money they gave him and wouldn't even bother to count it. Towards the end of the evening, he would return to his village. He lived his entire life like this.

He grew aged. There came the day when he lay on his deathbed. It was the first time he prayed. He said, "God, throughout my life I have accepted whatever you gave me through others, as it is. I didn't even verify whether it was a lot or not, nor did I verify if it was genuine or fake money. Now that I am going to die, please don't calculate whether I am a good or bad person, whether I am spiritual or worldly, just accept me as I am." Saying thus, he died peacefully.

The neighbours seated around him heard what he said and exclaimed amongst them "Alas, we missed a great spiritual Master who lived so close to us!"

The neighbours not only called the cobbler, 'spiritual', they also called him a, 'Master'. Why?

"The cobbler never knew any philosophy nor had he practiced any methods yet he was truly spiritual. Spirituality is nothing but an attitude - the trusting attitude of living in a humble attitude towards Life. The cobbler gained firm grounding through the journey of his entire life by way of a single attitude. By living devotedly in that attitude, he made it alive. So, when death came, he confronted and crossed over it peacefully and naturally - in that very attitude. He made death come alive and made it as beautiful as the whole of his life. All of spirituality is nothing but a preparation, an understanding of the phenomenon of death. He crossed it with simplicity and peace.

Most of us, at the time of death, lose all our acquired so-called spiritual knowledge only because it hasn't been truly lived by us. So, in the very moment for which it is being gathered it turns invalid. But the cobbler truly lived in his single attitude and became the attitude itself, which naturally reflected at the time of leaving his body. He is a Master."



CENSOR

We all know what censorship is. Censoring is removing or altering a part, or the whole. It leaves you with only what you approve of and want it is no more the unedited original. It is not the 'as is' version.

Ironically, not only does censoring go on in the world around us, but is already happening, all the time, right here, within us.

There is a censor within us. This censor is a fixation, constantly distorting our experience of our self and our surrounding world all that we relate to. By interfering and applying its own programmed ideas or theories it mechanically functions as a filtering process, as, we always choose to perceive what we want or expect to perceive and refuse the rest - leaving it out.

This censor can otherwise be called the Ego. It is this that constantly shows resistance to the natural flow of life by making splits like 'me and others'; 'empty and goal'; 'subject and object'; 'inside and outside'; 'past and future'; 'mind and body'; or 'soul and body'...

Often, what we call as 'our experience', in truth is not the actual, but our version or interpretation, of it. Our filtered personal version!

A collection of our personal versions builds into our personal world! Each moment we are constantly creating and conditioning our personal world based on ideas of how we have programmed ourselves to be. And each one of us lives in it! This is why, we often feel invaded by others or we sometimes like to seclude ourselves in the name of security just to remain an inhabitant of our personal world.

What we see and take to be the world is actually our personal, ideational, dead world! And we are not truly relating with the existent world nor are we experiencing our self or our surroundings, exactly as they are. Born from the web of habitual energy patterns the censor is neither real nor a solid thing. It takes the form of a pseudo well-wisher just so you can best function in the mode of 'survival of the fittest' in your projected personal world. Our ego uses this mode to maintain its existence and feel and sense the comfort of a constantly familiar world.

But what use is this craving for familiarity when all it does is make us numb and dull?

What happens when something of an unfamiliar nature meets us in the course of our life? We instantly try and neglect or refuse it by taking refuge of another mode, 'selective amnesia'. Why? Maybe because we hold a rigid understanding that every little unfamiliar incident or experience disturbs or shakes us. But we have forgotten the potential and possibility that a nature of unfamiliarity holds! It can awaken us from our habits, from our attachment to this numb, and dull sleep. But through censorship, we avoid all contact with the potential of unfamiliarity!

In other words, only in the darkness of our ignorance can the mode of censorship continue. We try and control life through these prejudices, presuppositions, interpretations and projections. It is nothing but an intellectual-

emotional fixation that splits the inherent unity of everything and blocks our natural fluid sensitivity to inter-connectedness.

Everything is as a living whole and everything is in a living whole, by a '*sensitive inter-connectedness*'. It is like a holographic phenomenon. All are participants and co-creators of life. There is no inherent duality like spiritual and material, mind and body...



As humans, the only natural faculty we have is this 'fluid sensitivity' that resonates with everything in this living whole.

For instance, while reading a fiction or watching a movie you often become the character you like most or one you are able to best sense the feel of. In this experience, there is no conflict between you and the character. Or when the sight of a beautiful mountain or a vast ocean captivates you, you sense yourself as a part of that whole environment.

What happens to our censor in moments like these? The censoring process or separation is swallowed by the immense presence of the mountain or, by the love and affinity you feel with the portrayed character. The 'censor' dissolves of its own accord owing to the awakened sensitivity of the inter-connectedness of the Whole.

In the 'letting-go' awareness, the censor dissolves on its own accord and in doing so it gives rise to a new quality of perception. This is 'perceptive sensitivity', or the awakened heart. Your own sensitivity as 'Perception' relates, recognises and realises things just as they are.

The ancient Siddhas call this awakened perceptive-sensitivity, 'Vaasi', and the Tibetan Buddhists call it 'Bodhi Chitta'.

Vaasi implies the living-essence, the primal-pulsation that is responsible for and actively shapes one's life. It has been said to be 'Primal', which clearly says - every individual inherently has it within them, then why have we forgotten the wondrous presence of this life-shaping 'sap'?

Is it because we are too busy with our job of censorship? Out of an error in perception, we went ahead and assumed ourselves controllers of life!

Once, the Master of a house was supervising a festival in his mansion. Someone called out and asked him to bring them something from the storeroom. He went inside and found his servant there, quite busy. Silently, he moved away; just as God moves away when he finds us behaving like the Masters of His wonderful creation.

There are times when a child grows tired of his toys. He thrusts them away and runs crying to his mother. His mother stops whatsoever

she may be doing only to hold her child close to her bosom. And the child stops crying! He doesn't even have his toys anymore. But his sensitivity tells him that he is in a place that is worth more than all the toys in the world. And now, even if you were to offer him his toys he would still brush them away with a smooth wave of his little hand!

When we say, 'I feel a sense of peace'; 'I feel all will go well'; and so on, we are actually referring to a mind-process in terms of sensitivity. And when we say: 'I feel the weather is too cold'; 'I find the floor too hard to sleep on'; 'the weight of the load on my head feels too heavy'. Or sentences like: 'I feel fear'; 'I sense an oncoming disaster'; or 'I feel its going to rain'; we are referring to emotions as well as our body in terms of sensitivity.

Interestingly, whether we realise it or not we inevitably refer to our body, our emotions, our mind, our feelings and our spirit in terms of sensitivity. For Man, that is the only 'underlying link' needed to be, realised and relived in his oneness of all and in the inherent unity in the diversity, as a living whole.

Ultimately, when all our acquired conditioning dissolves of its own accord by the 'letting go' awareness, we are awakened to this humble sensitivity that glitters in us. By and by this sensitivity clasps you and turns into perceptive sensitivity after you begin to live in your existential imperatives, remaining aware of your breathing, seeing, sleeping, hunger, loving, compassion, walking and running... a non-cerebral life.



INTER-BEING

*“Keep your attention on what is coming and going,
the one that came and went would become Vaasi”*

*- Valmiki Gnanam, by Siddha Valmiki
(Vaasi means living-essence /experience)*

We have forever been living under the censor mode in sheer habit and completely unaware of the result it has! We believe our consciousness, human consciousness, to be a deterministic machine or calculator projected by the Cartesian model of 19th century science (based on Newton's influence); we believe in a limited and false view of our inner world.

Few know what the sacred verses in the ancient texts of the Siddhas describe our consciousness to truly be. Amazingly, They chose 'Mercury' as its icon.

We all know what mercury is. Back in school, we all experimented with it and learnt its properties. It has density as well as fluidity and appears metallic. It

fragments into smaller globules and if brought together once again turns into a single globule. It is sensitive! What is the nature of its sensitivity? Mercury is used in thermometers. Contained in a glass tube it registers the surrounding temperature and rises, according to the heat it senses around. After it is removed, it falls back to where it was before.

Let us attribute these properties to our own human consciousness. It holds an entirely new and different meaning! Now human consciousness hardly seems limited or mechanical. Instead, it feels more like an ever-flowing river of the sub-atomic world.

The ancient Siddhas picture consciousness as 'Rasam', the inner mercury.

This sensitivity is characteristic to our consciousness and is obviously intrinsically present within all of us, and in everything manifest. Always flowing, it is the ocean bed of all Existence. Taking into account our employee called 'Censor', we can now see how it works, how it filters and how it is used to alter the true scene that lays spread on this vast ocean bed. It picks and chooses according to the employer's prejudices! Now is it obvious enough how high a degree of distortion the actual primal scene gets subjected passing through our ego censors?

Lifetimes of habitual tendencies, acquired ideas and images, the continuum of 'wants' or 'haves', mechanical lifestyles, cathartic approaches... all this is the dust veiling the primal scene. Although unfortunate, it is true, in today's age we need to read a book to recall and feel the stream of Existence always within us.

To summarise the fragmented attitude we employ daily in our livingness in a single word is easy - 'to have'. The purpose of life revolves around not one but many 'to have' centres that are always busy generating never-ending desires, wants, false images, acquisitions etc. The reasons for these insensitive patterns of falsity have been discussed in Section Four. But, for now, let us see what exactly got veiled by us employing the 'to have' attitude...

...The simple livingness, 'to be'!

From our freedom of choice between 'to have' or 'to be', we have been continually shunning the latter. But, when the burden of our choices weighs heavy and turn into compulsive disorders heavier than what we can carry... some of us pick up a search.

To 'be' in the direct and 'as is' flow of this inherent ever flowing stream leads into the true realm of Truth, which is rather different from being confined to our habitual mundane one. It unfolds as the fluid-chain linking our inner spark of consciousness with all the facets of the larger spark, the great world.

It is not hard to feel this fluid sensitivity within the body... first relax your body and lose any tension you feel. Make the body supple and

buoyant and remain with this in a relaxed way. Now you will feel the inner warmth of your body and you can sense it as a mild warm fluid. Simply watch and allow the resonance of this warm fluid nature. You will suddenly awaken to the living presence of your body. This is your perceptive sensitivity filling every pore of your body. This sensation, of a constant stream of warm life energy flowing through in the body, is somewhat like the experience of the whole body being relaxed and we remaining fully present in it. The nature of this sensitivity stands distinctively apart. It is pure, untouched, uncensored, unfragmented, undistorted; free of impositions and ideations. It is the true existential experience, as it is, untouched by mind.

If you have noticed we have just reintroduced ourselves to this sensitivity from right here, within 'our body'. It has come alive for us through the nearest and most intimate surrounding we know of our self Our body.



STEPPING IN...

This is why we use our own body as a doorway; the most 'stable' surrounding we know. It is unlike our breath, which can be felt but not touched and it is most unlike our mind, which is too fast to even grasp.

A commonly heard complaint in most of the alleged meditation camps or retreats is 'when I sit for meditation my mind doesn't settle down'... 'It keeps wandering in all directions' - 'useless thoughts are always crowding or invading the mind' and so on.

Usually, in the name of meditation, what we do is, try and fix an aim - 'quieten the mind'; for this we at once try and hold its activity and stifle it. But, pause a moment and give a thought - when you sit on your meditation seat how sensitive are you of it? Is it soft, tender, or hard?

In truth, there is no defect in mind. It does its natural function. Unless and until the intellect or ones feelings, desires are not completely satisfied the mind is bound to run about. All day long because we are completely engrossed in outer things our inner feelings become dependent on the outer things as support. So, when we forcibly, based on ideas of duty or practice, seat ourselves in a meditative posture and command the mind to become calm and aim for a state of 'no thought', what do you think will be the result? As long as we have not awakened to the prevalent inner sensitivity, why should our mind suddenly turn quiet merely at our verbal order - a conditioning of left-brain approach?

Therefore, rather wisely the Siddhas emphasise - start from wherever you stand. The first stable footing is your body and one needs to begin to

re-accustom himself with the journey of nurturing the rediscovered sensitivity. To perceive bodily feelings, evidently calls for slowing down. Slowing down enough to familiarise yourself and remain attentive to all that has so far been ignored. This journey is an advent of a gradual, progressive and wondrous unfolding, far from an overnight expedition or planned mission. It is the journey Home.

Depending on our own receptivity, the doorway of our body opens up a possibility; a possibility otherwise absent from the mundane and limited view of our self; have you ever wondered whether your body really does have the physical boundary that we ordinarily believe?

We can experience this un-boundness in a simple and ordinary way, for instance, while watching the sun, set into the horizon. Be attentive to the visual form of the object, the Sun. Allow your sensitivity to be taken from the form itself to the quality of the image, the feeling of its existence and remain with it. By and by, as you enjoy the resonance of becoming one with bodily sensations, they unfold and expand. This expansion dissolves the imagined boundary you first believed you had and you discover your perceptive sensitivity reaching out and extending to the space around.

Not only are objects perceived through this sensitivity but movements too. This attitude of perceptive sensitivity must slowly but surely, and naturally reflect in each moment of your day-to-day living. It cannot be pursued isolated such as by some practice undertaken in a closed meditation room.

Keeping this as your livingness, you will no more think of what you see or relate to by its content but will sense the quality of it. By consistently remaining with this stream of sensitivity through all our activities, unravels a sharp recognition of the qualitative energy of the perceived objects. Now, when you see a dog you don't merely see a dog but you recognise its 'dogness' as a living quality, in the energy of your own body.

In this way you begin to sense the unique quality of things and movements surrounding you as an, 'energy feeling' in your body and you gradually come to recognise this sensitivity to have its own fluid intelligence. This fluid intelligence is the heart of ever-flowing life, through which the 'dharma', the inherent order of life, functions.

This is the art of Yoga. This much verily communicates Yoga to be a part of our existence and not a separate and isolated practice. Yoga itself means relation or union. Yoga makes you aware of the inherent connectivity, the inter link of how the ONE resonates as multi-facets.

Amongst all the multi facets of human nature, the body alone is steadfast. The prana or vital life force is dynamic; as for the mind, we can hardly get a hold of it.

What if the stable quality of the body is instilled into the mind and the clarity and sharpness of the mind is made to resonate with the body. The mind is now a stable reflecting body and its quality is light and clear, pervading as body-consciousness.

The body-mind, express the serene spirit naturally present in all. It brings about an obstacle-free inherent connection between all intrinsic human faculties - Sensitivity is the real string.

The body becomes light and yet remains stable, the life force is freed from its customary restraints; the mind is fully present at what is being done in that moment, then and only then can the flow of awakened perception flow, even and continuous as perceptive sensitivity.

As for fragmented consciousness, it reflects as a dull, inert body and a restless and superficial mind.

Yet, don't miss the fluidity present at all times! Inertia too can take the form of its balanced counter part stability and steadfastness. Or restlessness and superficiality can transform into its balanced counterparts as authenticity and sharpness, whenever one awakens to ones sensitivity in a, mindful way.

In this way, Yoga is actually becoming sensitive to the relationship with oneself and with others; this is named as Yama and Niyama respectively. After this, Yoga shows you your conscious relation with your breath, your emotions, with your mind and with your very core, the Spirit. Yoga is the art of relationship!



Ancient practices in the Yogic cult of the Siddhas initially recommend gazing at the sun in the morning and at the moon at midnight. The Sun, to the onlooker, seems to be static at a particular moment but in actuality does shift after a while. We commonly use the terms sunrise, sunset, ascending moon, descending moon; all of which indicate their static as well as changing phases that resonate with time. In other words, the Sun and the moon represent the Primal Pattern of the moving and the static nature of the animate and the inanimate - so declares the wisdom of the Siddhas. Ordinarily, objects are present in either static or moving ways, but the sun and the moon have both these natures.

After recognising these Primal Patterns, if one grows sensitive towards them and feels his inter-connectedness with them, he will naturally feel the same pattern of sensitive oneness with all other things. Further on the fluid intelligence of distinction unravels itself and one naturally learns to comprehend the qualitative changes in energy inherent to Existence.

In order to understand what is meant by, '*recognise the qualitative changes that happen in the energy of the body in relation to objects*' - one can gaze at the moon at night. Become aware of your bodily sense towards it. Feel the energy in your body-mind. Now shift your gaze to the lamp in your house and be sensitive to the change in the quality of energy in your body-mind. If you are well sensitive, you can feel the subtle difference in your spirit of relating. This is a simple way of exemplifying the operating inherent intelligence and is available to us in our living. This too must grow to be an un-ebbing and intrinsic nature of your day-to-day ness.

Sensitivity or the humble flow of feeling is the perception with which we physically experience our, inter-being with others, our surroundings and the world.



The next milestone we read about is Time.

No individual's disposition remains constant or unchanging through the course of even a single day. Just sense a man's change in mood in relation to the changing times of a single day - morning, afternoon, evening and night.

Time too has it's own quality and participates in our daily functionality.

Similarly, even Space carries its own intrinsic quality such as warm, cold, airy, chaotic, peaceful, wild etc. If you notice closely, every space however large or inconspicuous demonstrates its own disposition, mood, character and ambiance. Be sensitive to this as it is another participant in our life. Pay heed to the space between you and your lover when you talk and notice how that sense differs when you talk with a stranger or your boss, or mother or friend.

The quality of space changes according to the quality of relationships.

Until now, we entered the doorway of our body via our sensitivity and travelled, extending our self through our body, to objects and the surrounding around, to our movements and actions, and to our relationship with Time and Space. In our journey we have distinguished so far that the qualitative changes or varying energy feelings within our body are in resonance with all that we perceive as separate. The separation is rendered invalid and nullified. Through the nature of ancient Siddha Yoga we have redefined our relationship with everything external.

Now, this ancient teaching, guides you back to yourself. You would have noticed by now, the quality of energy feeling within your own body-mind also varies and undergoes transformation. This is why, the Siddhas encourage visiting power-spots such as Samadhi shrines, caves of the Siddhas in the mountains, holy springs etc. Visiting such places, the energy or the presence

prevailing there heightens our sensitivity, with no effort on our part other than simply 'being' there.

For the individual it is verily enough to remain attuned to himself; to remain sensitive to himself. This sort of sensitivity grows and expands even more. His inner journey unfolds and divulges his sensitivity is always as his Heart. In other words, it means even if there are no forms or objects to relate with, he still remains as this pulsating, sensitive heart; his Atma Bhava. He finds he is always beyond any relative existence. This is called the Atma Anubhava, the experience of the Self.

This is inter-being... the inter-connectedness prevalent in all of existence, within and without. Everything resonates with everything. Everything is alive as One.



REMAINING HERE...

As each milestone is taken-in, it progressively leads to the next - transformation is inevitable. Now, all milestones and landmarks lay collectively open for you to flourish by; to flourish by this way is none other than 'Authentic Living'.

To abide and sincerely nurture a Living by this nature of perceptive sensitivity brings firm grounding in our existential self, the most intimate of all our surroundings - the most tangible life situations already given to us. One cannot possibly hope to reach the intangible without walking through all the doorways that lead to it. Our existential grounding is what escorts us to the otherwise hidden doorway of unconditional living; the ultimate grounding in Existence.

The entire chapter of Inter-Being resonates simplicity of what is already with us, but we cannot ignore or deny the obstacles we but naturally come across on this path.

The censorship attitudes, the mechanical patterns, the age-old urges, the mediocre mind, the fragmented and scattered attitude towards ourself, from time to time show their face, one by one or often even simultaneously, demanding our attention. And we must not forget that everything we have lived so far lies ingrained within each pore of our body. The mind cabinet is stacked with lifetimes of information, conditionings and improper perceptions. It all exists within, etched deep into the memories of our being!

Our journey on the ever-flowing river of the quantum world not only awakens us to the life stream of perceptive sensitivity but along with it also brings to life all that we have so far shunned, ignored and avoided. We find the only infallible means of nullifying the fast hatching in-essentials is by holding steadfast to the flowing river of our perceptive sensitivity; by applying this sensitivity to all the different conflicts that rise within us. It is the only way we can allow them to reveal rather than revert to grasping at the form.

For instance, when we feel angry, ordinarily we blame others to be the cause. But, by applying our perceptive sensitivity, instead of blaming others to be the cause, we find ourselves perceiving anger as just another kind of energy. *The distinctive intelligence of the sensitivity brings to our notice the qualitative aspect of this energy* instead of us mechanically and impulsively objectifying it.

Now, the conflict between the observer and the external form is progressively nullified into the bosom of mindful-sensitivity.

Slowly but surely, the journey of discarding the veil of a false and limited view of ourself reveals that there is only a resonate sensitivity as a Sentient and there is no other to separate. This 'Sentient' is the only One whole that ever pulsates.



FROM ACQUIRED CONDITIONING TO EXISTENTIAL CONDITIONING

After all our acquired identifications drop by way of mindful-letting-go and when one is free of fragmentary up-surging images, the Yogic Path of Siddhas now allows one to arrive at their ground of existential conditioning. It is a conscious process one undergoes.

Perceiving, breathing, dreaming, sleeping, hunger etc are all existential imperatives. They don't demand our interpretations and nor can we influence these by any new interpretations. All these existential functions nourish ones living. Depending upon each individual's psychic mode, the Yogic Master prescribes an awareness-related practice. This practice may be associated to any one of the existential conditionings. Even though activities like perceiving, breathing, dreaming etc. appear natural, each is actually a conditioning on human consciousness, as they are limiting adjuncts. But these limiting adjuncts are a different kind of conditioning as they are not the acquired kind. Let us now read an example of how this sort of practice is implemented for a Siddha practitioner.

BREATHING

Breathing and living are so deeply entwined that they co-relate and necessitate each other. After the practitioner drops what he thinks himself to be and starts to abide as who he *existentially* is, his existential breathing demands his total attention and involves his whole mind. When this precious moment occurs he begins to observe his ever-occurring breathing with dedicated attention.

He drifts as breathing itself. He starts to sense his breath and abides as it. This is Dhyanam or Meditation; perceiving the breath not by thinking or imagination, nor by acquisition, but by humbly perceiving how he existentially is as the breath itself. From here it cannot even be called as 'his breathing'...

Breathing happens whether or not he makes an interpretation or statement about it. Sensitive perceiving in fact is as natural as breathing. Perceiving makes him aware of the existential fact of breathing! Both are natural and existential. And he cannot even call it 'his perception'...

The mind is fully involved in this perceptive sensitivity of breathing, leaving no room for any fragmentary urges or motives. This is the wholeness of mind. Within him arises a state of silence reflects in the perceptive breathing.

Under the guidance of the accomplished Siddha Master, the Siddha practitioner is taught how our two existential conditionings are brought together in an immensely meaningful relationship, as both are already naturally entwined. In this we cannot separate the identifier and the identified.

Let us move on. The practitioner can now notice a slight pause at the end of each inhalation and at the end of each exhalation. This pause makes him realise his drift in existential conditioning is not continuous!

Any natural process in the entire Universe is not continuous.

He gains this parallel understanding. Behind the apparent continuity exists' a repository discontinuity that is the ground for continuity.

After this insight is established, the practitioner notices the pauses at the end of inhalation and exhalation begin to lengthen and deepen.

With a sudden awakening of pranic energy rushing through a channel and simultaneously withdrawing from some of the other channels opens an enthusiastic new vista of the ever-existent inner realms. The perception of the practitioner shifts from the physical body to the subtle body.

He gains a parallel insight, more refined, of the discontinuous nature of the discontinuity he now perceived.

As his insight unfolds, he understands that the repository discontinuity opens up into the continuity of inner pranic circulation.

Here, quite naturally, an enquiry rises from the whole being of the practitioner - There must be a Source, the Primal ground, from where this subtle prana emerges, circulates and manifests as apparent breath! It's a mysterious journey, our inner quest.

The breathing entity he earlier thought to be 'me', is the significant Root Image on which the perception of the whole objective world converged. Now, this Root perceiver, in search of the breathing entity now comes to confront in this inner quest, the One who breathes. This confrontation is shocking as, 'what he searches is who is searching'! In transition, the entire prana reverberates in the whirl of the Source, and is swallowed by IT. The perceiver vanishes!



VISION OF THE SIDDHAS

The ultimate realisation that any movement of thought only perpetuates the ego-centre and duality makes it quiet and in this quietude does the self-existent being shine forth. When the mind is free of craving for 'more' or for further experience, it becomes capable of total undivided attention. Unless and until this kind of identification is finally nullified through constant 'mindful letting go', the mind continues to lapse into different image identifications in the want of 'becoming'; of desire; of hope and disappointment.

The alert and watchful eye of constant unbroken 'mindful letting-go' sees the awakening of intelligence that holds a vision of the eternal. It is no longer caught by false identification of circumstances between the content and the container; the essence with the form; the eternal with the transitory. One remains truly established in oneself.

After the introduction has been established, the Yogic path urges on into deeper transformation.

When one is tired and feels the burden of carrying the heavy cartload of images, only then does he wish to rest. 'Mindful letting-go' entails leaving everything where it belongs; to see things as they are. Then the masquerading world does not hang in you...not unless you fall prey to identifying with it.

There is a trap. Contradictorily, even a single intention of wanting relief is itself an indirect sanction to our present chaotic identifying nature. We empower it and make it real we justify it. As long as we give sanction to our chaotic nature, the ever-peaceful state shall always elude us.

We have already discussed how we play fragmentary roles by our fragmented multitude of images. And mindful letting go is also one of the roles we incorporate to remove all the other acquired ones. At this stage our inherent intelligence provokes a natural enquiry - 'who, played these roles? Who identified with these roles? And who empowered these roles? It is the primal role, the causative factor...

To drop the very sense of this deluding Primal role of an identifying person, the Identifier must be shed. Our presence as the Primal Role still stands as an individual image, surviving as the Identifier. So, all our scattered experiences converge into a single experience - of an Identity; the Identifier, as an urge to identify. If the ever-ongoing urge for shelter is dropped, the refugee too drops. If our individuality as a refugee remains it once again commences the onset of coverings and motivations along with their respective dropping and letting-go. To realise this we need Inner-Spaciousness. This is why the Siddha Wisdom first propels us towards 'mindful letting-go'.

The Siddhas have said that a conscious de-conditioning process goes on uncovering and shedding our various acquired roles. After which we naturally arrive at our grounding - our existent individuality, which has so far been masqueraded under the assault of acquired images and pushed into the background. In this process it grows solid and emerges into the foreground of our being.

We find this nagging eluding individuality had so far been left untouched. But when we understand that this identifier is the primal ideation, from which all identification has started and it is what needs to be absorbed by the pre-reflective Substratum.

Now we understand there is nothing to be given up! For us to renounce the images and objects, first they must be ours. We cannot give up anything as nothing in the world truly belongs to us; other than this primal individuation, which has been identifying with the game of owning and disowning. One can, possess the whole world, but the world never feels possessed; one can own this body, but the body never feels owned!

MOVING TO THE PRE-REFLECTIVE SUBSTRATUM

If an individual continues to use his same old acquiring approach and tries to grasp 'more' of the pre-reflective Substratum realm, it is only because the identifier wants to now survive as the possessor of the ever-shining awareness. But here too, this individuality encounters solid defeat. In its own search, it falls and succumbs... the individuality itself gets wiped out in the process of transformation.

The pre-reflective substratum is from where the reflective state of subject and object; identifier and the identified occurs. The Ancient Siddha Sages have given many names to this Absolute substratum:

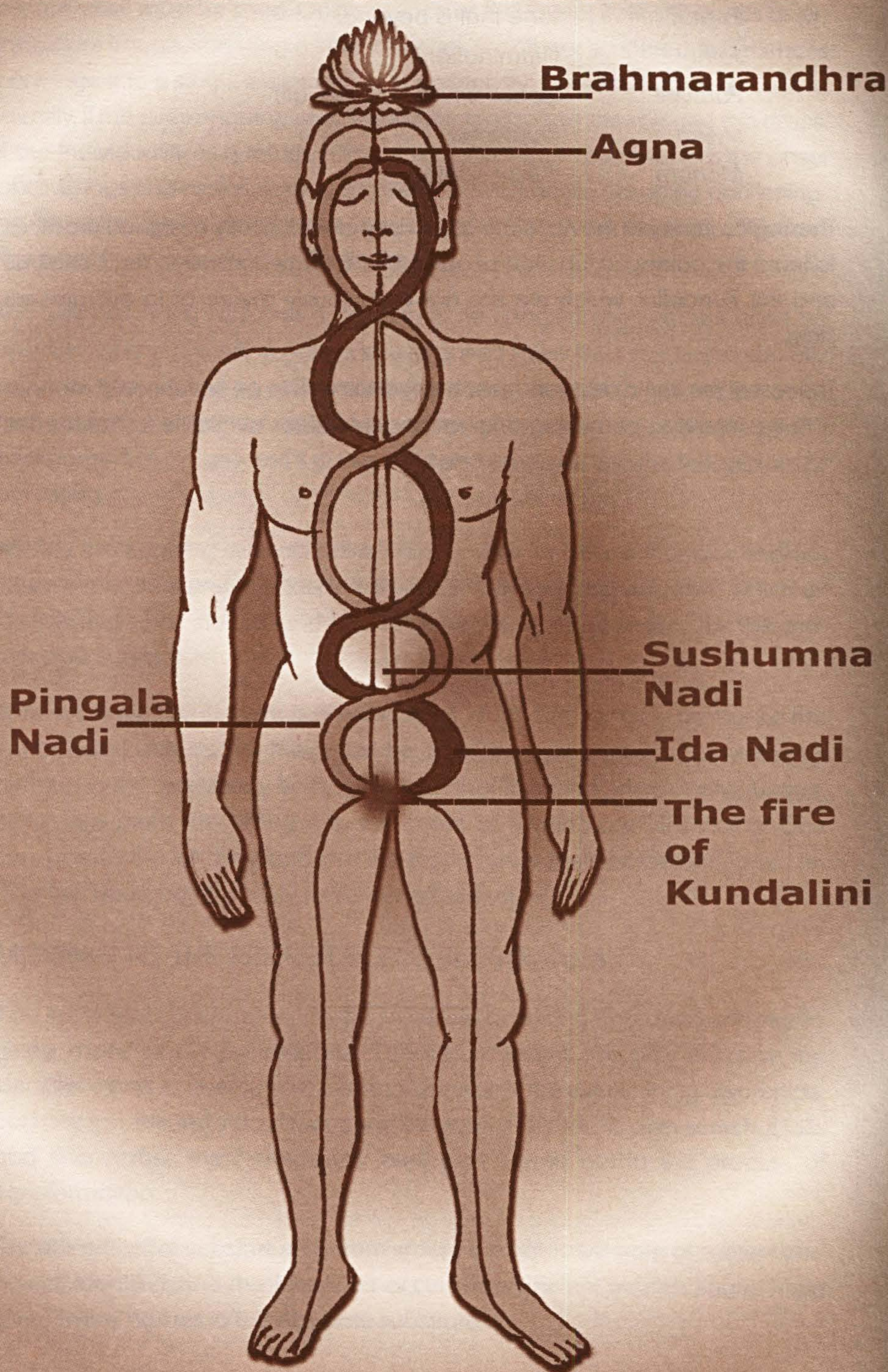
<i>Vettaveli</i>	(grand infinite space)
<i>Param</i>	(one that is beyond)
<i>Jothi</i>	(illumination)
<i>Paraveli</i>	(space which includes all)
<i>Sivam</i>	(Supreme)
<i>Monam</i>	(Silent Spirit)

The Yogic journey to the Absolute comprises of specifically designed practices to learn the balanced function of our subtle energy-pathways, Yogic chakras and the Kundalini, which we are not consciously aware of in our present state.

The rest of the Yogic chapters have been dealt with in a conventional manner with the intention of making original ancient values available to our reader.



NADIS INSIDE OF THE HUMAN BODY



THE INNER MAP

*“Vaanukkul Isanai Thedum Marularkaal
Thenukkul Inbam Sivappo Karuppo
Thenukkul Inbam Sirunthu Iruntharppal
Unukkul Isan Olindhu Irunthane”*

*“You ignorant men searching for God in the heavens,
Can the sweetness of honey be explained as black or red?
Just as the sweetness of honey is in the honey itself
Thus God is hiding within the human body.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 3069, by Siddha Thirumoolar

*“Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils;
For wherein is he to be accounted of.”*

Holy Bible - Isaiah, chapter 2;22

The conventional definition of Yoga is Union and the root word ‘Yog’ means ‘to unite’. In other words, Yoga is the path to unite with our true nature. Yes, Yoga concerns itself with relations because Life in each and every moment expresses Herself in some or another form or relation with nature, with our surrounding, our situations or with other fellow beings. Yoga teaches us how to relate with our external world and with our self.

To reach a specific destination it always helps to have a path finder and in this case it is a map, our Inner Map. As this journey travels far beyond our imagination, our inner map translates the abstract into concrete and continues to light the way for us. The Siddhas have long ago revealed this grace-lit path, Siddha Yoga, for all of us who hang in our fragmented nature using a living map. It ensures the way Home; it ensures a falling-back in our original nature, which up until now has remained elusive to our materialistic perception.

As mentioned earlier, we cannot easily grasp our mind or our spirit behind it. This holds true as we are predominantly oriented towards the physical dimension. We have already explored our physical dimension in the chapter of Inter Being and thereafter, the next tangible doorway after the body - our Breath.

The ancient Siddhas give importance to the breath, saying, even though it cannot be touched, it can be felt. A highly salient quality declared in the sacred verses is of breath and mind to be two sides of the same coin. In other words our flow of breath is the best mirror of the state of our mind. Our state of mind reflects in our flow of breath. It is that ideal bridge linking the physical and non-physical dimensions of our being.

The breath through its bridge leads us deeper within and introduces us to our non-physical dimension that is always enlivening our physical dimension from within us... our Prana. This pulsation of life is what gives impetus to our physical breath. Prana is the silent breath. As we consciously tune to our physical breath it behaves as the door to our silent breath and as we continue to consciously tune to our prana, it in turn opens to our subtle body, the realm of our chakras, which happens through the subtle energy pathways within our body, called the Nadis.

As each Chakra opens completely and flowers, it simultaneously triggers an unfolding of our 'establishment' in our individualistic consciousness by the involution of each of the five elements into their primordial nature. The vital experience considered in this journey is Kevala Kumbhaka (natural breath retention). A true Siddha Master always ensures this for his student. This is the first vital experience before all the other vital experiences that follow in this path.

The Siddha's Yoga system covers all the vital factors that act as milestones in our personal journey through the inner map of our consciousness.



Various ancient Tamil treatises known as '*Siddhars Tattwa Katalai*' enumerates 96 different constituent principles, or Tattwas, present in Nature. These 96 principles are declared to remain intimately interrelated with one another even within the constitution of a human body. Through the course of the book we have dealt in detail with only the very important ones.

For our readers to recognise how closely interlinked they are to the doorway of breath he first needs to be aware of at least an outline of some of the principles.

*"The nadis 72000 are in human body,
Among them, 10 are chief ones."*

Awai Kural, Verse 1, chapter 4

*"Among the 10 there is one chief Nadi,
That is full of power."*

Awai Kural, Verse 2, chapter 4

*“The nadis spread and ramify, penetrating
Feet, hands and hip... like threads of a lotus stalk”*

Awai Kural, Verse 4, chapter 4

*“Like the sun’s rays, these nadis
Ramify and spread out.”*

Awai Kural, Verse 5, chapter 4

*“Verily these nadis spread throughout the body
Intertwining the bones and the nerves
Their ramification is the end.”*

Awai Kural, Verse 6, chapter 4

Prana is the force of creation or Life. In the Tattwa Chapter we saw the Air element is attributed with the sense of touch and sound (the Gnanendriyas, or organs of knowing). Our consciousness identifies with the body and we experience body-consciousness and its limitations through the touch modality. Through this modality of touch we feel alive and express and relate with others. Prana arises from the qualities of touch and sound inherent in Consciousness. So, when Prana within our constitution suffers imbalance, other faculties tend to follow suit. And a balanced Pranic flow ensures the harmonious alignment of the body-mind-spirit to continue as Life naturally programmed it.

According to the Siddha system, the human body, which is both physical and subtle, is made up of 72,000 nadis and the seven vital centres (the Chakras) which are situated along the central channel called Sushumna Nadi. The three important regions of Fire, Sun and Moon; the ten vital airs (dasa Vayu); and other vital nerves (nadis) are all found here. Out of the ten vital nadis, the first three: namely Idakalai (moon), Pingalai (sun), and the Sushumna Nadi (central channel or lifeline) play an important role in human life.

Several ancient Siddha songs mention that Vaasi (subtle air) begins to manifest at the centre of Lalada, the hollow behind the forehead, inside and above the Agnai Chakra. From here it passes into and through the Chitra Nadi; then jumps down into the sacral plexus with the sound 'OV' and passes into the navel plexus with the sound 'AV'. From here it enters into the Idakalai and the Pingalai with the sound 'SAV'; then it circles the cerebrum before finally entering into our nostrils.

A man's normal act of breathing as prescribed by Siddha science is at the rate of 360 times per Nazhigai (one hour = 2 ½ Nazhigai); this comes to 21,000 breaths every 24 hours. (1 day and night = 60 Nazhigai). In other words, there should be 15 breaths per minute, which works out to (24 x 60 x 15) 21,600 breaths in a single day and night. This would be the normal rate of breathing if a human were to live on this earth for 120 years. In an ideal

situation, with this potential every act of breathing (both inhalation and exhalation) would take place from a space at a length of 12 inches in front of the nostril. During our usual, actual inhalation breathing process the energy utilized by the body is from an extent of 8 inches only, and the remaining 4 unused inches are being wasted. By breathing out to a length of 12” and inhaling from only 8” we are losing 4 inches in the process. This continues to repeat itself in the act of normal breathing. This is to say that out of the 21,600 total breaths a human body takes in a day only 1,440 breaths are utilised by the body and the balance 7,200 breaths are wasted.

If the prana were properly utilised the normal human lifespan would be 120 years, which clearly suggests we are not utilizing the entire energy required to live up to the age of 120. A large part of that energy which ought to enter our body is actually lost during respiration, in each breath. To add to this, we suffer an even greater loss due to our bad lifestyle behaviours.

The consequence is clear- the natural life span of 120 years stands considerably reduced.

This is expressed in the verse as:

*“Nal Onrukku Irupathu Orayirathu
Arunooru Elunthirukkum Suvasanthane
Kolonri Nanooru
Kavi Moolatharathul Odungum Paru
Palonra Elayirathu Eranooru Moochu Palaga Painthum Enru Ariga
Pinnai
Alonri Idathanaiya Utchathithal
Eppothum Balarai Irrukkalame”*

“Twenty one thousand breaths are born in a day.

*In that, fourteen thousand and four hundred breaths are absorbed in
the Mooladharam,*

*The remaining seven thousand and two hundred breaths are
absorbed in the surrounding space.*

If you absorb these remaining ones, you will be ever youthful”

Yugimuni Tattwa gnanam-46

Breathing through the Ida Nadi in left nostril the breath inhales a length of 12” and exhales 16”. And breathing through the Pingala Nadi, or right nostril the breath inhales a length of 8” and exhales 12”. Where does the extra 4” length exhalation of breath get its impetus?

The remaining four inches of the subtle Prana comes from within and not from the external breath. This is how the Siddhas highlight the way we spend

the existent Prana from within us in our normal breathing process and not really acquire any.

The subtle Prana, the pulsation of life, is responsible for the internal momentum needed for our breathing process to function. This is Vaasi. The Siddhas show through the path of Vaasi Yoga, the way to consciously re-link with this pulsation of life. And obviously They contempt our normal way of breathing, declaring it to be breathing to the void.

The remaining four inches of subtle Prana can be activated when the moon channel merges with the Sun channel and the remaining four inches of this Prana begins to expand. This plays a vital role in the segregation of Amritha. Saint Ramalingam says, very few are born with an activated Pingala Nadi at the time of their birth. Most people are found breathing through their left nostril at the time of birth. Characteristically, the Pingala Nadi shows aspects of assertive human will; a hot nature, whereas the Ida nadi is related to passion and emotions, a rather cooling nature.



Our physical body is both, the temple of the soul and the microcosm of the entire universe. The bodily temple, as with many traditional Hindu and Buddhist temples, contains gardens, rivers, sanctuaries, and gates; as well as the elements of the natural world: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. The nine gates to our bodily temple are: the anus, male and female genitals, the mouth, the nose, the two eyes, the two ears, and the 'passage of Brahman' (The Absolute) or Brahmarandhra.

The mysterious passage of Brahman in current medical terminology, known as the fontanel, is an actual opening, which is visible at birth but closes as the baby grows. It is also familiarly known as the 'soft spot' found at the crown of an infant's skull. Tantric tradition discloses that the soul enters and leaves the body through this Gate of Brahman. Although our bodily temple may be entered or left via any gate, it is the Gate of Brahman, which leads to higher spiritual realization.

In addition to our physical body, Tantra also describes our subtle body. The subtle body contains the aura and the chakras. And the nature of the chakras manifests through the ductless glands. The two bodies are inseparable and both should be worshipped as one temple. Taoists call this Brahmarandhra the 'Mysterious Passage to Heaven', and the process as 'Returning to the Source'.

A current of centralised Prana is constantly moving upwards and down, from the Sahasraram to the Mooladharam chakra, even though we may be unaware. When the outward-bound operations of our mind diminish and an indrawn pull arises, the Yogic life begins. An earnest seeker learns under the

Guru's guidance to perceive this current and be attuned with it, until his psyche rises from one chakra to the other, and finally reaches its resting or uniting place, the Paraveli, (Brahmam). Thus, it should be noted that within our body exist all the centres of mind and Prana.

Life-energy tends to go to the place where mind is concentrated and mind is lead to the place where prana is directed. This union of mind and prana reveals the knowledge and the secrets of the particular Tattwas (basic elements) of each chakra centre. The existent relation between our chakras, mind and prana is a wonderful mystery. By studying the working of different chakras and their presiding deities we come to know how divine energy works through our different centres.

Siddha Sage Thirumoolar explains:

*“Where there is mind absorption, there life's breath is:
Where there is no mind absorption, there life is none.
Those who sit in mind absorption are verily fixed in the yoga of
whole absorption”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 620



Movement in the passage of vital air from Pingala into Ida is known as the Uttarayana, or northern course of the Sun. Movement in the passage of the vital air from Ida to Pingala is known as Dakshinayana, or southern course of the Sun, just what is happening in the external world.

Presiding over 'the path of the Gods' and 'the path of the ancestral spirits' respectively, are the solar and lunar energies. From the path of the sun in the posterior channel and from the path of the moon in the frontal channel, these energies move along the Ida and Pingala channels in the human body, day and night distributing pranic conversion all over the body.

*“Don't stand aside! aside!
Don't take ganja (Marijuana) and be caught by its Tamasic sleep.
There is nectar of moon with you, to dine,
Drink it and happily clap your hands.”*

Gnana kummi, (clapping the hands in way of wisdom).

By Siddha Vaalai Swami Madurai.

Lunar energy, moving along the Ida channel, sprinkles life-giving nectar over the 72,000 nadis. And Solar energy, moving along the Pingala channel, dries up the sprinkled nectar. When the sun and the moon meet in Mooladharam chakra, (i.e. when the prana reaches the junction between Ida and Pingala), it is said to be 'Amavasya', or new moon day.

The Moon passes through sixteen phases (sodasa kalai) and changes a phase each day of the descending moon days. On the new moon day it comes to its first phase in the Mooladharam Chakra. Yogis consider the new moon day ideal for awakening the Kundalini Sakthi or for giving or getting initiation. Siddhas in their mystical songs mention the new moon day as 'Ama Vasya'. Ama means Mother and indicates the cooling nectar that nourishes the entire living process, just as a mother who nurses her infant with her own milk; and Vasya means 'coming to stay'. All the lunar digits of the dark fortnight emerge from this source. This is referred in the poems of 'Awai Kural' written by the woman Siddha, 'Awaiyar', as

"Thondrum kathiravan mathi pukkidil

Sarrupan amavasithan"

"Mathikul kathiravan vanthu odungidil

Uthikkumam pooranai chol"

"If the moon meets with the sun

It is Amavasya (new moon)"

"If the sun is absorbed in the moon

It is Pournami (full moon)"

Awai Kural By Woman Siddha Awaiyar

With the help of the fivefold prana, the Yogi can keep the moon in the lunar sphere and the sun in the solar sphere. Being arrested in their movement, the moon and the sun become incapable of oozing out the nectar or of drying it up. Then, the fire from the Mooladharam is set ablaze in the body by Vaasi yoga. This, in the Siddha system, is called as 'moola kanal' (basal fire). But before this can happen the moon should conjoin with the sun, so that the fire in the sun can emerge from the Mooladharam.

The chakras are an inner phenomenon experienced by the Siddha Yogis during absorptive concentration; and as such cannot be identified with nerve plexus, which are anatomical organs. The chakras are not material in nature but dynamic graphs of power operations. Yet they are not figments of our imagination; the power of each chakra can be manifested in a concrete way, by appropriate means.



CHAKRAS - THE WHEELS OF LIFE

*“Ullanthinulle Ula Pala Theerthangal
Mella Gudainthu Ninradar Vina Geda
Pallamum Medum Parnthu Thirivare
Kalla Mana Mudai Kalvi Illare”*

*Within the body are many holy waters.
People do not take a gentle dip in them
And do not avoid karma completely,
Vainly they roam across hills and valleys-
Witless men of confused mind are they!”*

Thirumoolar's Thirumanthiram, Verse 509

IN THE BEGINNING...

...Divine energy or soul force, un-manifest and invisible is *Nirguna Nilai*, a state free of all attributes!

Then from Prakrithi, by AdiSakthi, does the course of creation begin the manifestation of all beings animate and inanimate. The course of energy thus directed towards creation and manifestation, is *Saguna Nillai*, a state with all attributes.

Now, bringing this cosmic phenomenon from its macrocosmic level to a microcosmic level, the primal AdiSakthi in its microcosmic form of the evolutionary aspect is none other than the Kundalini Sakthi that enters the individual foetus, bringing in life-force.

The entering of the Kundalini Sakthi within the foetus activates the pranic system in the body. The residual energy coils 3 ½ times into a small bulb of energy and goes into a dormant state at the base of the spine. With the onset of pranic activation the mind engages in the process of living and one identifies with the body, the genetic heritage, mental, sensate and emotional processes, in forgetfulness of 'awareness of the Self' - the Source of all Existence.

Thus the Kundalini energy or soul-force begins its life-long display of two kinds of movements: Centrifugal - a movement from the centre outwards and

Centripetal - a movement towards the centre. This patterned dynamic flow continues until one either attains a Samadhi experience or mortal death.

These two opposing forces travelling in an, interweave with each other come to meet at junctions in a certain hierarchal order. At each of these meeting points or junctions the course of energy assumes a continued whirling and spiralling form. These whirling and spiralling forms or junctions of energy within our subtle body are the CHAKRAS - THE WHEELS OF LIFE.

Interestingly, Chakras are storehouses of the Karmic imprints of our past births. And on account of the opposing currents actions, one's mind (also a form of energy) gets whirled in attraction to the external world and its polarities, under the influence of these Karmic imprints. All sorts of aversions, desires and egoistic propensities re-arise, move forward and materialise. This is Pravritti, the outward movement of the mind.

Then, only when all the Karmic imprints begin to burn and exhaust themselves, does the withdrawal movement of the mind naturally take place, which is known as Nivritti.



WHIRLING PERCEPTIONS

*"If you worship the wheels of life in a series,
If you happily emancipated the blessings of Sada Siva,
The wheels of life, the vision you saw,
Will surprisingly fade away and disappear."*

Soumiya Sagaram-1200, Verse-72, by Siddha Guru Agasthiyar

The mind gets modified by its very ongoing outward movement and gradually assumes gross forms, described as mind solidification. This way a deep and solid identification with the body is assumed. But, interestingly this assumption doesn't hold true in a state of deep sleep whereas in the waking state all associated forms of I - consciousness; such as, my body, my house, my work and so on show deep-rooted. Under the dark shadow of this identified conditioning one does not remember anything as the 'unidentified' to stand by itself: the pre-reflective state.

So, through the identified reflective state, thought after thought arises in the mind and human consciousness rotates like a whirlpool. The current of such mental modifications flows unceasingly. Hope after hope comes into being and the mind becomes bewitched by its magic charm. Just as the sun is not visible in a sky over cast by clouds, likewise the Self cannot shine as long as the mind is identified with the floating clouds of hopes and desires.

Humans caught in the meshes of conditioning go on spinning round and round in the whirlpool of pleasure and pain, deeply immersed in false identifications and mesmerised by the three-fold misery of disease, grief and death.

One cannot correct an error until one recognises it. Only when Man realises he is submerged in delusion does he decide to extricate himself and wake up to the consciousness of who he truly is. So, when the agony of sorrow gets overwhelming, then alone, come any attempt to be free from delusion. He starts knocking on all the available doors. These attempts give birth to the seeker in him. The dispersing current of identification is set aside from his mind by these spiritual aspirations and is replaced by the dint of a spiritual path.

Consequently, the range of pictures conjured up by the identifications of the mind gradually dwindle making the mind interiorised. This interiorised mode breathes its deeper aspects depending entirely on the pace at which the withdrawal of mental modifications takes place. The 'Chakras' get formulated within the body according to the differences in perception levels and corresponding to the respective subtle attitudes of the mind. The seeker now realises how the quality and intensity of mental modifications get navigated and impelled by the appropriate centres within. He comes to understand how the seed of tendencies, pertaining to particular identifications, belong to specific chakras.



These six centres within our subtle body are nothing more than whirling storehouses of the finer aspects of solidified mental modifications of the mind. When mind abandons all externalised play of identifications and gradually gets interiorised by de-identification, one becomes conscious of one's different levels of perception. These different perceptions range from gross to subtle and refined. These altering and refining, energised perceptions, are the Chakras. As long as mind holds perceptions the body holds it as the energy whirling chakras. When one abides as one's natural state; as who one truly is, all mental modifications cease to be. The chakras have no existence in this natural state.

People, continually engaged in a multitude of grasping and gratifying pursuits, sink into darkness and remain addicted to an abnormal way of life. Their minds are highly attached to abnormal sense-gratification. An over-indulgence in this exhaustive insensitivity turns the mind obsessive and in this condition, mental fancies swiftly speed on. Such people generally remain caught at all times in the lower part of the body - the region between the anus and the sex-organ. The extremely sensual and depraved mind loiters here. Whereas the intellectual aspect of the mind gets sharply fragmented and loiters in the

head area due to the obsessive use of conceptual identifications with the world. The mind of the individual has split into duality. The two split fixations are the obsessive sensuality in the lower regions and the dry intellect in the head. This aspect has been discussed in depth in the coming chapters.

As long as the mind is split in this manner, the individual's body remains submerged in restlessness; it is constantly bombarded by conflicts arising from the two splits. One may have commonly heard this conflict - 'my heart says one thing and my head another'. Man cannot conceive the truth and remains submerged in imaginary enjoyments. The will power gets dragged and dissipated by diluting tendencies - this we call 'mechanical patterns'.

In deep sleep, the existence of the world and ones own body is not felt. Similarly, the Kundalini Sakthi remains asleep because the mind is steeped in the darkness of ignorance. Consequently, the realisation of matters beyond the sphere of the world cannot unfold in this mind.

OCEAN OF WAVES

Speaking of the macrocosmic level for a moment, our Universe is in a constant flux; continually vibrating, generating innumerable different kinds of waves. Recent geophysicists report findings of a regular humming sound emanating from below the earth's surface. With the Big bang, a dispersion of fragmented segments went into a revolving motion, each generating their own hum. This hum is a continuance of the Primal Sound - AUM. According to the French scientist, Dr. Arnard, the vibrations of the astral world are represented by a lower octave than the vibrations of the mental world, which are found to be much higher in vibration.

Incidentally, an octave comprises of seven notes and the eighth note is a repetition of the first - A recycle. A maze of waves of different levels, forming organic and inorganic systems (including humans) capable of receiving and emitting different waves, is our Universe.

Similarly, on a microcosmic level, the Tantric Cult of Siddha Teachings in the journey of awakening the Kundalini Sakthi describe seven octaves of vibrations corresponding to the seven chakras, having a specific Bija mantra (seed syllables) like AUM... for each.

LIFE POWERED BY

The Siddhas describe the emergence of ten vital forces from the Maha Prana - five main Vital forces and their five subtle potencies. The entire living process of each individual is in truth powered by these Vital Forces.

These Vital forces are responsible for the dynamic functionality of specific functions needed in the entire living process.

Within the body, the first inherent vital force responsible for the breathing process carried out through the nose is Prana. It originates and receives momentum from the Mooladharam chakra, rises upwards to hit the top of the head and then works through the nose, accomplishing the breathing process and is the very essence of this process in the body.

Siddha Yugimuni, speaks in his work Nadi Tattwa, Verse 35,

“Every time we breathe we exhale twelve units and inhale 8 units only and thus waste 4 units of vital air, this in fact leads to debility and diseases in due course.”

The second Vital force, Apana, originates in the Swadhistanam Chakra, in the lower abdomen, (2” above the anus) and enables the separation of the excretory matter from the digested essence of food. It is also physiologically responsible for the contraction of the anus.

Samana is the third vital force, originating in the Manipoorakam Chakra, found in the naval region. It functions in the assimilation of the nutrients gained from food.

Originating from the Anahatam, or Heart Chakra in the chest region is the fourth vital force, which totally balances and circulates throughout the entire body and is called Vyana.

The fifth vital force, Udana, originates from the Visuddhi Chakra in the throat region and is responsible for all conducts of distribution, stirring and mixing of the eaten food. On its failure to function optimally, we experience what we know as suffocation.

These are the main 5 vital forces. There are 5 more, subtler than these that also have various functions.

For example, the force that enables us to open our eyes, mouth etc., is called Anga.

The Kirikaran force is responsible for the increase in one's appetite.

The force enabling the contraction of limbs, cheeks, stomach etc is Kurma.

Another force that helps relaxation by opening the mouth wide and yawning is called Devadatta.

Dhananjaya is the force ensures the sustenance of the body by the intake of nourishment into the body. It originates in the nose area. This force causes inflammation in all parts of the body and an abounding outflow of saliva from the mouth after death. When all the other nine vital forces leave the body after death, this vital force

breaks open the skull and escapes from there. But, for a Yogi it proves a vital tool in the separation of life force from his body, causing voluntary death. This force also explains the Jiva Samadhi state of some Yogi's and his mastery of withholding it within.

These Vital forces are the superior energies of the Lord that accompany the soul and reside in the spiritual heart, the central region - Nothing escapes His guidance and observation!

WHEELS OF LIFE...

According to the Siddha Tantra Yoga, there are twelve subtle energy centres within the human system.

Siddha Thirumoolar names them as...

Six of these are Adharam, meaning base; the remaining six are Niradharam, meaning without or beyond base. The first six centres are found ranging from the base of the spine to the centre of the eyebrow in the forms of Lotus plexuses or Chakras (Chakrams in Tamil) and are the plexus centres of pranic dynamism, functioning both inwardly and outwardly.

The remaining six signify the experience of different stages of spiritual interiorisation, leading to the Ultimate mergence of the Self. These six aren't accompanied by any experiences of flowering or petallic formations like the first six.

When by Yogic practice awakening commences for a practitioner, these centres generate latent forces and awaken powers such as conquering the process of ageing; overcoming disease, decay; the mastery over Elements etc.

The first six Major chakras are the control centres for the areas related to five different sections of the spine:

- (1) coccyx - Mooladharam
- (2) sacrum Swadhistanam
- (3) lumbar Manipoorakam
- (4) dorsal - Anahatam
- (5) cervical - Visuddhi

Above the throat charka, Visuddhi, is the sixth - Agnai chakra; the third eye, or point between the eyebrows. And the seventh, Sahasraram, although not really considered a chakra like the previous six, is located at the crown of the head. Each lower chakra is a portal to the energies of the higher one.

AWAKENING THE WHEELS OF LIFE...

Awakening of the dormant Kundalini Sakthi and the flowering of all the petals of the chakras is highly mysterious and uniquely expounded by the Siddhas and much sought after by yogic practitioners.

The most common place, an awakening commences is at the base or root of the spine. As the inner Kundalini awakens, it uncoils and ascends like a snake. That is why it is often referred to as the Serpent Power. This energy bulb of Kundalini Sakthi can be awakened in several ways such as an intense devotion to God or the Guru, surrender to Existence, Dharma, the repetition of mantras and various Yogic practices, or even by complete adherence to the words of the Guru.

In the Siddhas literary poems, they sing of the varying features attributed to each chakra such as Gods. Goddesses, symbols, syllables, mantras, colours and characteristics related to different levels of spiritual revelations.

Interestingly, the Siddhas also sing of a unique revelation: the flowering of the lotus petals in its entirety is an extremely rare occurrence!

In a common awakening, only the presiding Male deity of each chakra, symbolising that aspect of consciousness would bless the practitioner and the merging of rising consciousness would take place in an involutionary way. But, the Siddhas emphasise the flowering of each chakra in its entirety, occurs only when the awakening of both the Male presiding deity and the Sakthi aspect, as the Goddess deity, take place.

Let us consider the first chakra - the Mooladharam, situated in the base of the spine as an example to understand the essence of their emphasis.

Mooladharam Chakra, situated in the basal area of the spine is an egg-like form surrounded by four petals. Within this egg is a triangle with its apex pointing downwards. In one of the angles of this inverted triangle is a plantain-tree bud of eight petals. Another angle holds the presiding Male deity, Lord Ganesha. And in the third angle the feminine aspect Goddess Vallabai Sakthi, stands. In the centre of the triangle there is a Siva Lingam around which lies the coiled golden Snake with its hood spread over the top of the Siva Lingam. This coiled maiden snake is the Mother Kundalini Sakthi. The Nandhi bull, the vehicle, is also seen.

*“Seeing, the root seems egg-like in form,
Standing there as tri-konam, with reason,
A ring surrounding three angles
Four petals encircle,
Approaching, four lotus Bija,*

*Va, Cha, Sa, Sha,
Nearing, then a vision of inner light
Of the triad AUM-kaaram,
Try to find within it..
The first of AUM is 'A'-kaaram."*

Bogar Sapta Kandam, Verse 11

*"Upon the A-kaaram Ganesha presides
In another angle the U-kaaram stands,
Vallabai Sakthi presides on this U-kaaram,
Then, is a plantain flower in the converging angle
Below this, Kundalini Sakthi's calling face
As like a coiled maiden serpent, ready to strike,
Permeating, with ease within the edge of the whirl,
Is the state Thuriyatheetam."*

Bogar Sapta Kandam, Verse 12

Siddha Bogar sings the above description in verses of his work: Bogar Sapta Kandam, which holds total of 7000 verses. In following verses of this work, he goes on to describe how the eight petals of the plantain-tree bud remain closed and flower only by Grace. Every petal holds its own specific feminine Deity, denoting the Sakthi of the particular corresponding Siddhi. Hence, there are total of eight deities within the bud, signifying the Asta Siddhis.

In the Mooladharam Chakra, with the awakening of the male aspect, these hidden or latent eight Sakthi's veil themselves by, blessing the practitioner with an intoxicating experience, thus rendering him unable to perceive these eight hidden Sakthis'.

One may not have read or even heard of this revelation of an eight petaled plantain-tree bud found within the four petaled Mooladharam Chakra. Siddha Bogar says, on the opening of these eight petals the practitioner attains the blessings of the Asta Siddhis from their Goddesses.

One can understand the magnanimity and hidden potential of the full and entire flowering or awakening of the first Chakra itself. It is a tremendous boon to the practitioner as the Asta Siddhis can perform great miracles.

Ironically, nowadays people speak casually of awakening within the eyebrow centre and the flowering of the, thousand petaled lotus! Such is the ignorance!

As per the sacred verses of Siddha Bogar, the egg shape he describes in the Mooladharam chakra is the seed of the Universe manifested externally and contains the potency of the dormant mysterious inner world within us, which needs to sprout and flower. The name Mooladharam is significant of its divine

essence of being the very Base for both internal flowering and external manifestation.

A VIEW FROM THE ANCIENT WINDOW

The revelations of the Siddha's are impersonal and ultimately aim at non-egoistic livingness. They describe us as just different combinations of the same cosmic force coming through the Planets and Stars. The ego, our sense of personal identity, is mere fiction, an illusion that does not exist. We all have the same basic nature, both superficially and in depth and go through the same basic life experiences, good and bad, solely for the purposeful growth of our consciousness. No soul gets any special treatment, good or bad. In this way, our differences come merely from being at various stages of the one process and not because we are in Truth truly different or separate, better or worse than one another.

According to the Siddhas, the essence of health flows actively within us as Divine Light. Snaking its way up through the subtle nerve-like threads of the body, called Nadis, it expels darkness of the past, un-knots traumas that have remained caught or stuck in the cellular memory of the body and so on. This way the person ceases to feel limited by his past lives, present life traumas or old thought patterns, by bathing in the Holy Springs within.

On an awakening, Life is free from the ghouls and fears of the subconscious and all past life agonies and grief appear faint and brief, performing their last turn on the stage of opposites before they transmute forever into Light. It is the ultimate opportunity to be anew or twice born.

From the Siddha perspective, illness or pain, are never seen as suffering but as purposeful events within a universally ongoing evolution; a simple process of divine cleansing. Most of the chronic diseases - hypertension, arthritis, allergies, auto-immune disorders, diabetes, asthma, back pain - on which the entire healthcare industry thrives, are in fact manifestations of energy encountering blocks; a resistance in its flow. All that is needed is its liberation for it to continue on an unhindered path.

All humans inherit the same potential as well as the same basic problems to work out as their destiny. We also inherit a common spiritual goal to help us go beyond outer influences primarily, the need to feel important in the external world and of repeatedly proving ourselves. In this regard, every birth chart paints the picture of ignorance, our patterns of desire and our web of karmic imprints, in the bondage of which we are caught. The mind lives in our body through the energy system, the subtle body, and affects our gross body. In other words, the consciousness of our mind reflects in our energetic subtle body.

Wherever, the attention of ones mind travels is where ones energy follows. And, wherever ones energy gets blocked is where one has turned insensitive and unaware, implying the absence of free flowing perception. In order to know where ones mind lives or does not live, in our body, and how this has come to be, one can start observing one's own energy phenomena and gain an understanding of it. But how this happen in a world that bombards us with so many external influences?

Recent neurological studies indicate the human brain with its electromagnetic fluids to be constantly processing and generating waves that affect our sensitivities. One can find noise to be jarring to the ear and music of different kinds work and stimulate us in different ways. Our reactions show us how sensitive we are to sound and light waves. Fast-paced music generates within us enough pulsation to push us into over-drive, whereas melodious music creates a soothing experience.

In ancient Indian myths, the process of creation and destruction is metaphorically picturised by the Cosmic Dancer Siva dancing to the Cosmic Tune. One can now understand why the Siddhas prescribe certain Bija Mantras (seed syllables) in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. Just as the resonance of external waves affects us similarly the resonating Bija Mantras lead us to experience the vibrations of the relevant whirling chakras of our subtle body.

Light waves too carry an impact on the brain, as do sound waves. This is seen by our reaction to different shapes and colours. We can check ourselves for the way we feel, around shades of red and brown or shades of blue and green. We can even observe how noise as well as visual pollution in urban cities and semi-urban centres affects us compared to the open countryside.

Over the years, we have created a world-view that is largely visual and descriptive in nature, more of an exhibitionist approach, and because of this we are more in sensitised towards ourselves.

Subtle energy practices demand a high-level sensitive awareness and clarity in perception levels. Even though our subtle energy functions are always at work within us, to be aware of this requires more than a mediocre level of sensitivity. This is why it is not easy to truly experience the dynamism of our chakras and its various dimensions such as the colours, vibrations, inherent nature, characteristic traits, and the presiding deities within each.

Many modern day practitioners merely visualise or imagine the chakras and its attributes in their practices. This cannot be considered as true experience. The actual revelation of each chakra gives an undeniable and spontaneous experience.

MISSED CONCERN

The Siddhas have clearly stated all human life-experiences meant solely for purposeful growth, transformation and the expansion of consciousness. Even though individuals stand at different milestones on their path of life, our journey is one. All rivers converge in to the Ocean. Likewise, even if each one of us moves farther and farther away from ourselves clutched by the iron hands of life, we are inevitably made to rebound back to ourselves in a moment of spiritual crisis. Thus, in feeling the utter inability of our will, we are brought to confront the masks disguising our existential nature.

A long-standing conflict between our free will and fate, arising from a lack of understanding from behind the scenes, triggers a spiritual crisis. An unresolved conflict can take a severe turn and reflect in ones personality as expressions ranging from mere confusion and un-clarity to more intense states like schizophrenia, multi personality disorders, paranoia, psychosis etc, all of which affect ones body and lifestyle.

In other words a spiritual crisis, almost always precedes a medical condition. It is crisis overload; too much, too fast. When our logical mind and other parts of our personality miserably fail in processing the experiences, we find ourselves falling into an abyss of chaotic confusion. Shall we say that amidst this chaotic world at some point or another in our lives we feel the genuine need for an awakened guide, who has travelled the same road and emerged victorious, in a state of advancement.

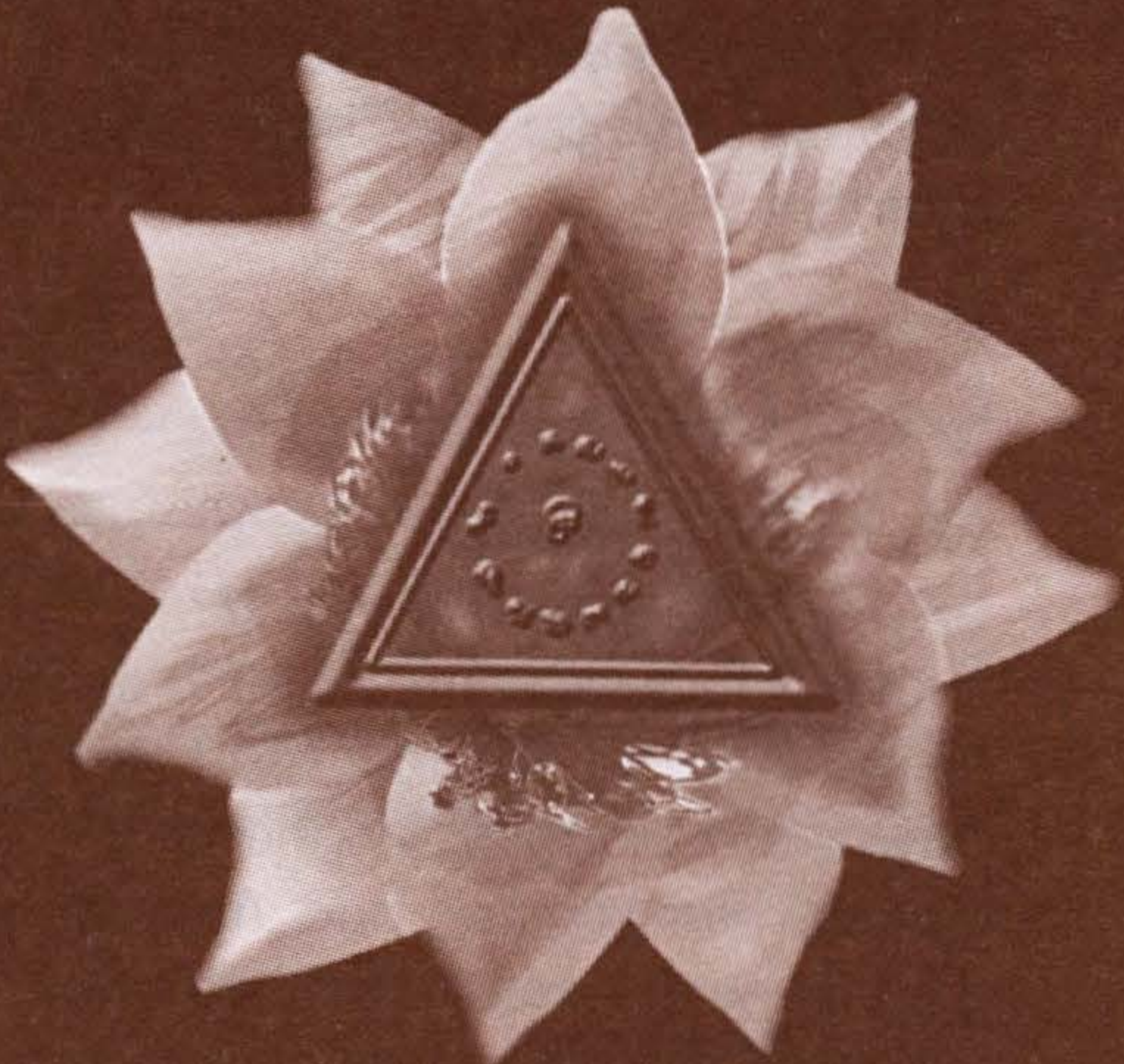
Energy-practice and awakening the Kundalini sakthi are not paths meant for the unaided. But, unfortunately, those who can guide are busy mystifying themselves rather than spreading the light of awareness. And those who do make it forward into the social world end up making it a business!

We are left with the sole option of progressing in this ascent with a genuine longing that fuels a burning quest for Truth. This sincerity itself calls forth a shower of Grace truly required for transformation. When enthusiasm for transcendence is intense, inviting experiences are bound to follow and the teachings of ancient Siddhas are never more relevant than now.

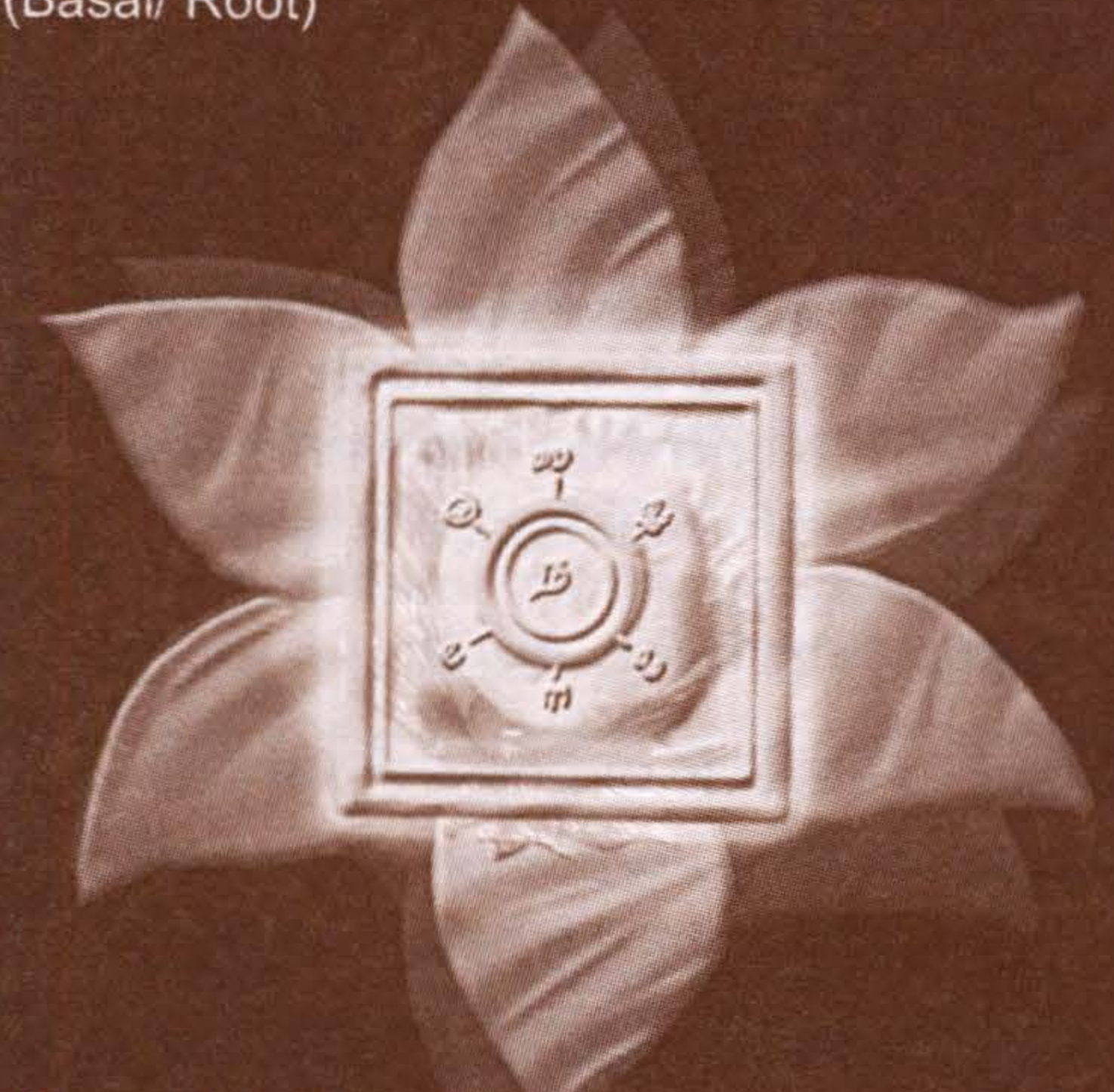
CHAKRAS



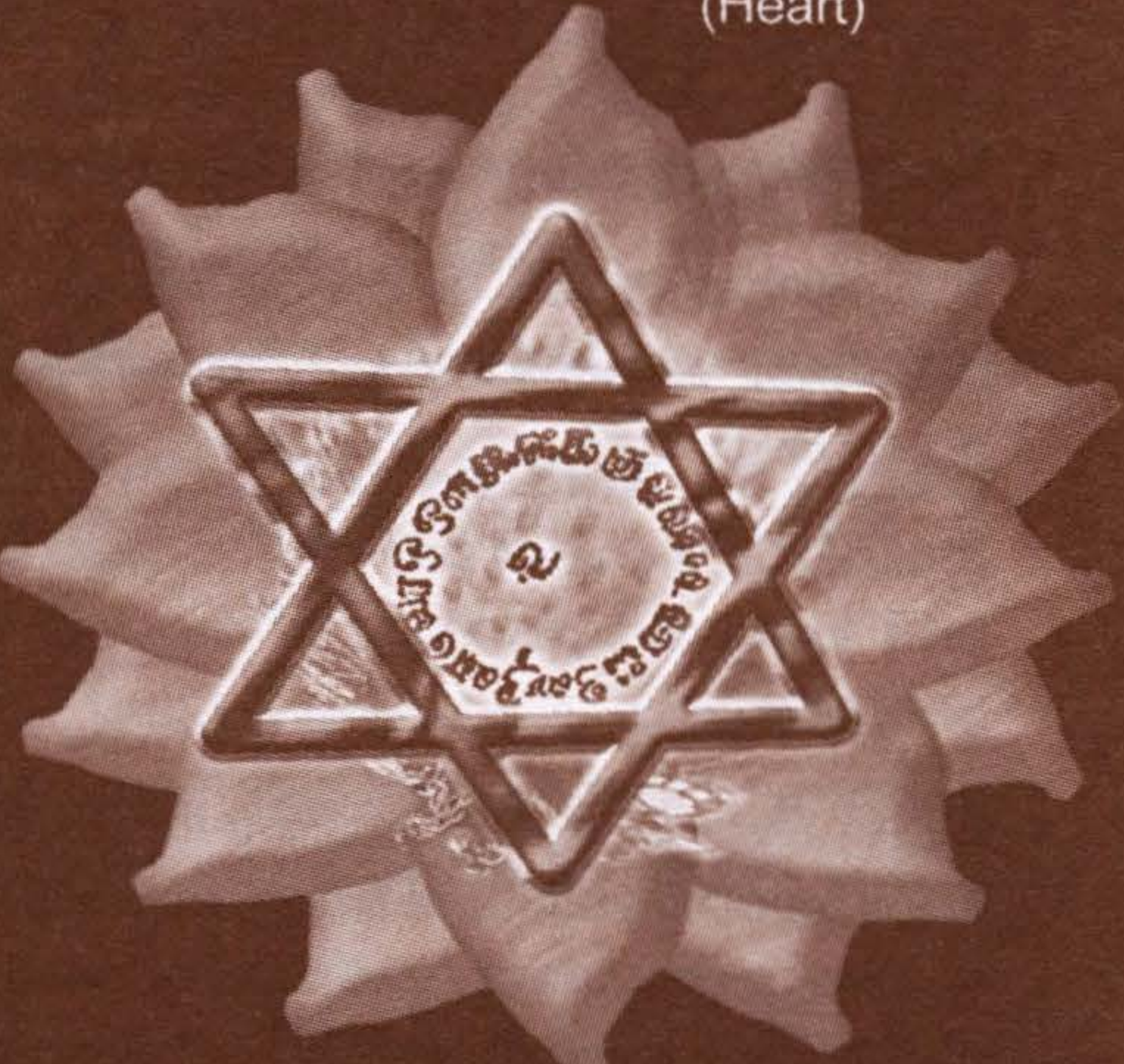
Mooladharam
(Basal/ Root)



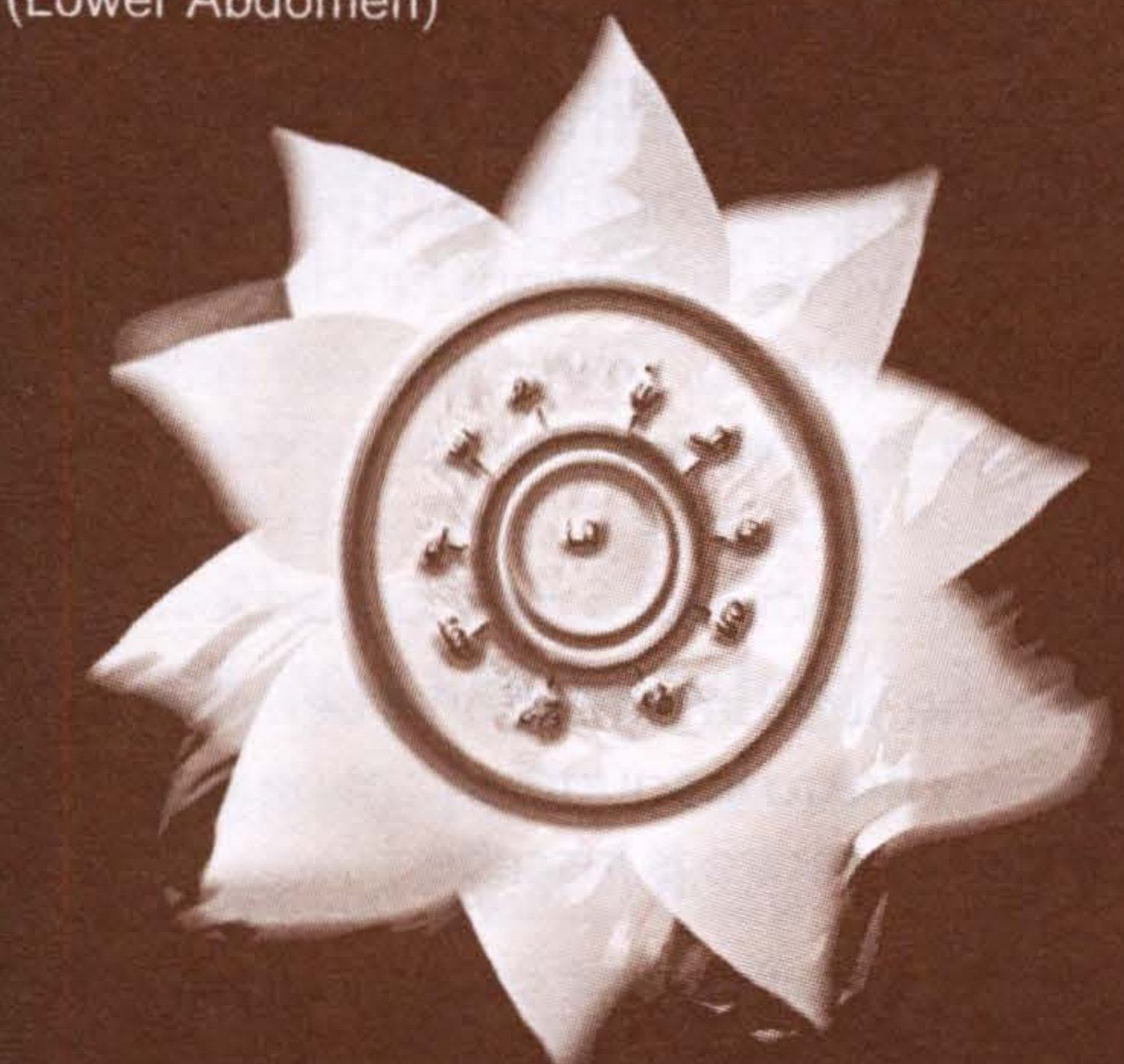
Anahatam
(Heart)



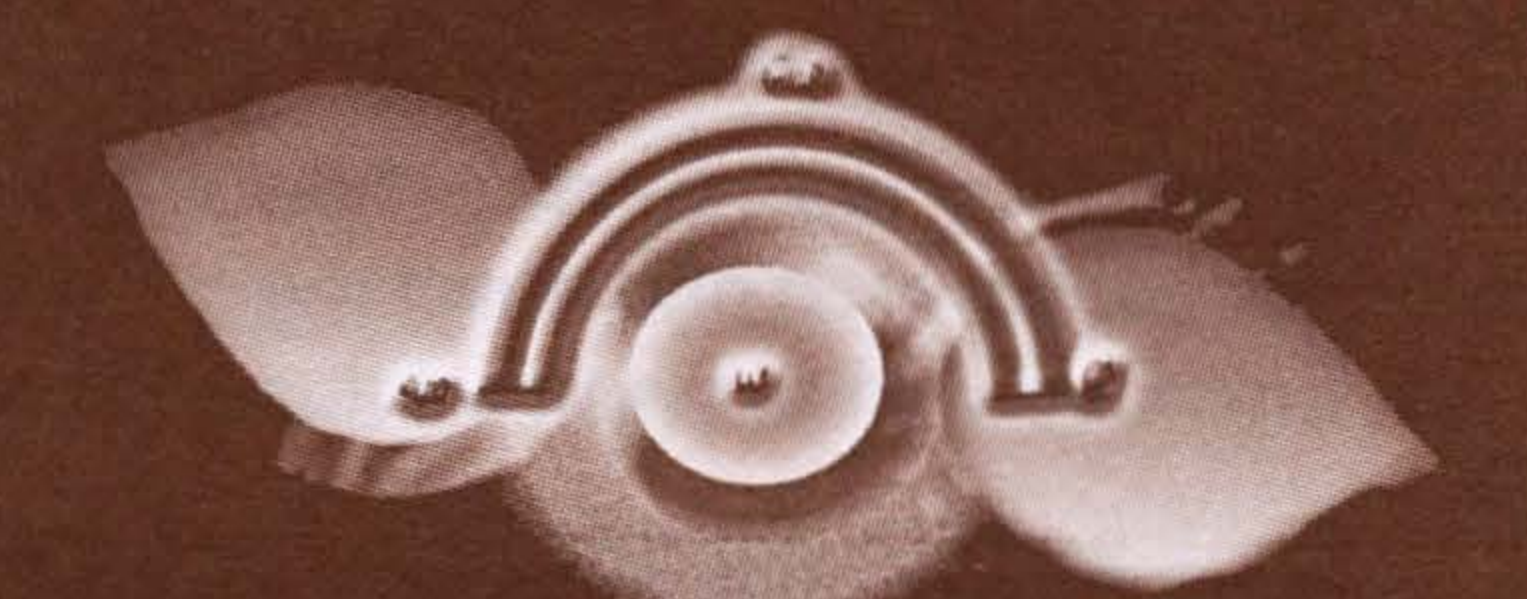
Swadhisthanam
(Lower Abdomen)



Visuddhi
(Throat)



Manipoorakam
(Solar Plexus)



Agnai
(Eye-brow)

LADDER OF HEAVEN

As we mentioned earlier, the experience of the chakras are revelations and cannot be studied, memorised or worked out. Although other modern day books may approach this subject in a technical fashion by giving a lot of data, we describe the Chakras with only as much detail as required for the moment.

Mooladharam

Root or Base for both the Physical and Inner World

This chakra is situated at the base of the spinal column in the perennial area between the genital area and anal orifice. This 'chakra' is a deep red coloured lotus of four petals, surrounding an egg like circle. Within this circle, is found a green inverted triangle, and its downward point symbolizes a yoni (a downward triangle). In one of the angles of this triad, there is an eight-petaled plantain-tree bud. Another angle shows the presiding male deity, Lord Ganesha and in the third angle stands Goddess Vallabai Sakthi. In the centre of the triangle sits a Siva Lingam. Coiled around it is a golden snake with the snake-hood spread over the Siva Lingam. Nandhi bull, the vehicle, is also seen here. The coiled maiden snake is the Mother Kundalini Sakthi.

Its Atcharam, or seed syllable, or mantra (Bija in Sanskrit) is 'AUM'.

The characteristics of this chakra are related to aspects of physical survival, anxiety, groundedness or ungroundedness.

Literally, the word Mooladharam means foundation or base; it also means receptacle. It carries some of our past Samskaras (karmic imprints); experiences and residual sensations of our previous lives are stored here as dormant potentials.

Other Yogic schools consider this as the chakra of the Earth element, but the Tamil Siddhars attribute no element to the Mooladharam and instead perceive it to have an independent yet quite central and vitally significant function, as will be discussed in the section 'Rivering the Fire'.

Swadhisthanam

Own Place

Moving upwards, the next chakra is situated in the sushumna channel between the genital area and navel region. This yellow chakra is square in shape and encircled within a yellow lotus of six petals. At its centre is inscribed

the letter 'NA' signifying the Earth element. From within this square-shaped chakra shines a yellow green colour. The Tamil Siddhas attribute Prithivi, the Earth element, to this region. The presiding Male deity is Lord Brahma and the

female deity is Goddess Saraswathi or Goddess Vani. The meaning of the word Swadhistanam is 'home' or 'own place' of the individual self.

Its inherent nature is procreation, passion, over attachment, impulsiveness and emotions.

Manipoorakam

Gem of Rays

This chakra is situated in the Sushumna Nadi in the area corresponding to the navel. The lotus here is seen having ten petals; inside the circle is a white crystal coloured crescent moon, entirely submerged in water. The space above the water level has a rising light shining forth. There is a deep significance of the light above as well as the crescent moon submerged in water. The submerged crescent moon denotes the subconscious mind and tendencies one is not consciously aware of; and the light above refers to the conscious mind.

'MA', is the seed syllable.

The presiding deities are Lord Vishnu and Goddess Laxmi. The symbolic posture of Lord Vishnu sleeping in a milky white ocean influences all living beings, making them identify and attached to apparent things in a delusive way. This is the very nature of Yoga Maya. Lord Vishnu is the presiding deity of this Yoga Maya. The element or Tattwa attributed to this centre is water.

The meaning of the word 'Manipooram' is literally, 'city of crystal or rays'. This chakra called Manipoorakam by the Siddhas has another definition: 'Poorakam' meaning inhalation and internal assimilation: the gem of assimilation.

Its characteristic traits are related with pride, confidence, achievement, competitiveness and personal power. This area marks the climax of all material possessions, power, name, fame and authority. More details about this chakra can be found in 'Rivering the Fire'.

With the unfolding of dispassion towards craving for power and other characteristic traits mentioned above the individual gains a fuller understanding of the transient nature and futility of worldly things one ordinarily remains attached to, then a love for Truth flowers and the individual naturally transcends and rises to the next chakra.

Anahatam

Uncaused Mystical Throb

The chakra in the region of the heart is the seat of Lord Rudra (Lord Siva's aspect as the destroyer of the manifest worlds) and Goddess Rudri (or Bhadrakali).

Its seed syllable is 'SI'. The element attributed to it is fire, red in colour and its form is a triangle with its apex upward. There are twelve blue in colour petals.

The function of this chakra is in the realm of personal love, feelings and compassion.

Anahatam means the uncaused or un-agitated. When the Kundalini rises and this chakra flowers an entirely new dimension and realm, blooms for this individual. The awakening of this Chakra transcends the earlier lower chakras and the material identifications that go along with them. Here the individual is reborn, into the spiritual realm.

Its nature or traits are love, benevolence and devotion, flowing ceaselessly from within, without being triggered by any external factor. The experience and the expression of it is Universal Love: love of God, love of human beings, love of one's Self, all three in ONE, Everywhere, for everyone and everything.

Visuddhi

Beyond Obstruction

This chakra is located in the throat or neck region, at the junction of Medulla Oblongata and the spinal column. It is the seat of Lord Maheswara and Goddess Maheswari. This plexus is related to the Air element.

The chakra is a smoky grey formation of a six-pointed hexagonal star with 16 petals, inscribed with the mystic letter 'VA'.

The characteristic traits belonging to this chakra are the expression of feelings, clarity and sharing, communication and creativity.

The individual who has already awakened to devotion and to integrated spiritual feelings by the flowering of the previous chakra Anahatam, on the awakening of the Visuddhi chakra flourishes expressing himself in creative ways with an unobstructed flow. Divine creativity such as devotional poems, devotional music and singing and divine forms of art flourish now.

Conventionally Yogic practitioners of other schools would withdraw the pranic current from dissipating through the nine orifices of the body by way of Bandha and Mudra techniques. This is called as Prana Pratiyakara; withdrawal of the Prana from the senses. But, the Siddhas uniquely emphasise this centre the origin of the Air element, the awakening of which leads to the natural withdrawal of the pranic current from the nine orifices of the body, and the nadis. Therefore, individualistic concentration for withdrawing each of the aspects of pranic current from the respective orifices is unnecessary as the air can be restrained in its own house itself.

Visuddhi also means 'extremely pure'. Within the personality of the Yogi it manifests pure beauty, pure goodness and pure Truth.

Agnayam

Non-duality (Agni in Sanskrit)

The Agnai chakra is situated at the end of the Sushumna Nadi, in the centre of the skull - the inner junction point between two imaginary lines drawn to the centre from between the two ears and joining at the midpoint of the eyebrows.

Here we find the seed syllable 'YA'.

The two-petaled lotus is indigo in colour and this is the abode of Lord Sadasivam and Goddess Manonmani. The related element is Ether. Here the two nadis Ida and Pingala finally merge.

*“Left hand, Right hand,
Change both hands!
If you eat with the hand of worship
Not depleted, you forsake sleep
And become realised.
You need not die, but live eternally!”*

Thirumanthiram by Thirumoolar

The functioning of this chakra is related to intuitive qualities, divine contentment and perceptive sensitivity.

On the awakening of this chakra the objective consciousness drops and the individual remains intoxicated as subjective consciousness. The Siddhas call this state as Thar Bodham; which too must be transcended.

Here, absolute knowledge unfolds within the Yogi. Knowledge is contentment, freedom and bliss, but there is yet a little limitation to be surpassed. Subtly, subjective consciousness still remains. In other words, Truth is the 'object' of perception and oneself still remains as the 'subject' in it.

Sahasraram

Field of Flowering

The Sahasraram is above the Agnai chakra, near the point corresponding to the 'soft-spot' of a baby's head. The word Sahasraram means the 'thousand-petaled lotus': the symbol of the transcendental state of Absolute Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Here, subjective consciousness flowers with an un-ebbing flow.

This state is known as Nirvikalpa Samadhi, a state devoid of any thought or movement of mind. One is beyond time, space and causation. In fullness, the innate divine nature manifests in pristine glory and infinite bliss.

When there is a full culmination of the thousand and eight petaled lotus, the blissful consciousness finds its settling place either by descending through the Amritha Nadi to the Spiritual heart or by travelling twelve inches upward, above the Sahasraram and merging into the Dwadhasantham; here 'Dwa' means two, 'Dhasa' means ten, and 'antham' means the ultimate or end.



Each chakra has its own specific deities:

CHAKRA	GOD	GODDESS
Mooladharam	Ganapathi	Vallabai
Swadhistanam	Brahma	Saraswathi
Manipoorakam	Vishnu	Laxmi
Anahatam	Rudra	Rudri
Visuddhi	Maheswara	Maheswari
Agnai	Sadasiva	Manonmani

The presence of a presiding God and Goddess within each Chakra demonstrates the inner significance of the deities' spiritual nature and aspects. If we describe the Goddess as the power of identification of the particular modes in each chakra, then, God is the presiding consciousness over that specific channelised (Goddess) force. Ahamkara, the power of identification, is the basis of all addictions, i.e. identifications.

This Goddess' nature is Ahamkara (Aham means inner and Kara means propelling, rising, or projecting). This power of identification is also the Kundalini Sakthi. Ahamkara deceives herself into believing she is mated to the limited physical body. In order to de-identify from her limited identification as body-mind, she undertakes a journey through the chakras. On reaching the top, Sahasraram, She finds her true identity as the withdrawal of the karmic prana from the solar and lunar channels into the central channel, Sushumna nadi takes place here and the slumbering Kundalini Sakthi 'uncoils' completely. Here, the Goddess (Sakthi) begins to realise She belongs to Siva.

Unfortunately for the uninitiated or inexperienced person, if his power of identification (Kundalini), awakens to its true nature in a sudden or rash manner, it causes a sudden, forcible and overwhelming de-identification with the limited body-mind, making it a completely un-assimilable experience.

On realising the vast conscious space of Siva, Sakthi sacrifices her limited individuality, surrenders to Him and what happens is instant enlightenment. An individual, ungrounded in crystallised consciousness cannot assimilate

this whole, huge influx of Kundalini Sakthi happening upon the sudden transcendence of all identified limitations. So both, time and body-mind adversely lose their ability to identify. This can lead to several complications like brain haemorrhage, seizures, nervous debility, mental disorders, cancer, coma, and in extreme cases can cause physical death due to an overwhelming damage to the nervous and immune system.

Therefore, one must be advised, guided and supervised carefully as an incredible amount of energy is released in the 'path of energy practices'. The only way to go through energy practices that transmute Goddess Sakthi's binding limitation by merging her with her conscious nature, Siva, is under the proper guidance and blessings of a Sat Guru (A Master of Truth), who is none other than the manifestation of the presiding consciousness, Siva, in human form.

By His Grace, the limited personality is transformed by expansion into the 'Vettaveli' (the Space, Infinite) of the Siddha (Sat Guru), abiding as 'the Grand awareness'. Siva signifies the nature of endurance, assimilation and transcendence as the eternally presiding power over Sakthi.

*“Tapas, performed in the mountain valley within my head,
Lo! I beheld the Lord with consort Sakthi,
I crossed the river of birth in this fleshy body,
And met the Thief, hiding in Kailash.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2597

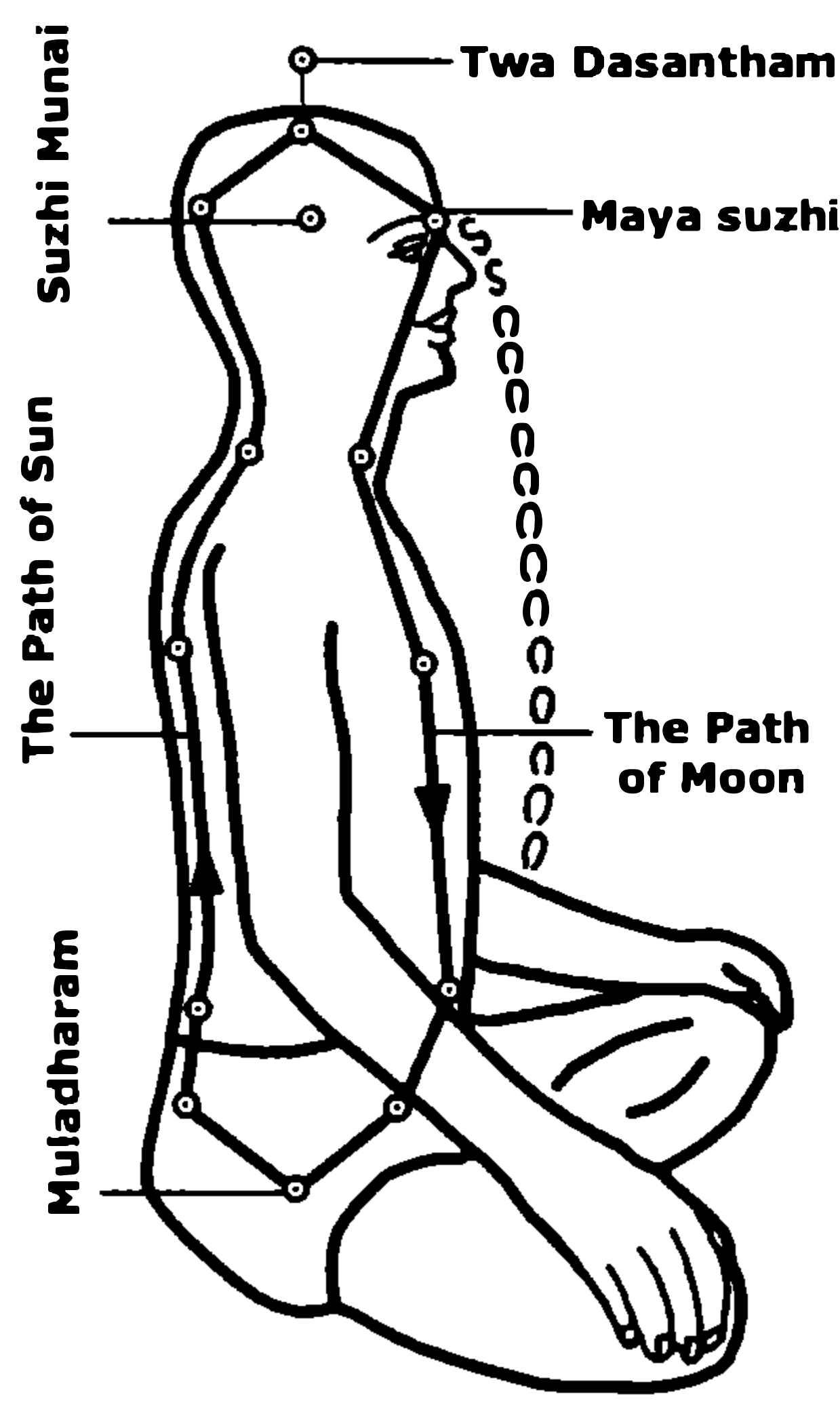


KUNDALINI - RIVERING THE FIRE

“Once upon a time, a Master was walking with his four disciples, passing through many places and villages. They had been walking continuously for two days, day and night, to reach a particular village. At dusk the four disciples were totally exhausted. They decided they couldn’t take a single step more. One disciple, looking at the Master, said, ‘Enough! We cannot walk any further, not even one more step. We have already walked much further than we could. We have never walked such long distance ever before; but somehow this time, we have walked this far! Now we have to stay here, and rest.’

The Master said, ‘O.K. You may stay here. I will move on. You may come tomorrow morning, after you are refreshed’. Then, before leaving his disciples, the Master said, ‘But, my dear disciples, I have heard there are many tigers attacking people at this place. So do take care’. He started to walk away. Suddenly, crossing in front of the Master were all four disciples. The Master caught hold of one and asked, ‘Wait! Just now you said you didn’t have any energy at all, now, from where have you suddenly got all this energy?’”

Our relationship with the energy within has been conditioned according to our way of living and the needs of our society. Our level of utilised energy depends upon both personal traits and social conditioning. But in some situations such as shock or the arousal of a sudden fear of survival, this pattern of conditioning is shaken and loosened. A miraculous change occurs! An unbounded reservoir of energy opens up making itself available to us in that ‘free of conditioning’ state and suddenly we become conscious of this boundless reserve of energy. This unlimited and unconditioned energy, of which we are ordinarily unaware, can be called the Kundalini Sakthi.



RISING OF THE KUNDALINI THROUGH THE CHAKRAS

*“Igniting a fire, pouring ghee, daily doing Pooja,
Keenly you bathe in water and listen to the Vedas.
The fire and water is within, if you reminisce,
Then you will merge with the never diminishing Light.”*

Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal Verse 31

The Sushumna Nadi starts in the Mooladharam, the basal chakra, where the Mother Kundalini Sakthi lies dormant. The Sushumna Nadi is blocked until the graceful awakening of the Mother Kundalini Sakthi. After the opening of this blockage when the Kundalini rises through the Chakras, all the tendencies and karmic imprints stored in their relevant chakras begin to burn in the fire of Kundalini. In other words the Sushumna Nadi blocks the spiritual evolution of an individual, until the arousal of the Kundalini Sakthi commences through the divine path, known as the Sun path.

*“Below the Earth, the path of Sun,
Being a rare one, none see,
Then rises between Fire and Water,
Reachable to none, the Sun is He.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse 1982

Before we proceed to read about the Rising of the Kundalini, we can first get familiar with the 3 basic lower chakras playing a vital role in our identification with the external world.

Mooladharam

In the Siddha Tradition, the Mooladharam chakra is assigned no element. In the evolution of the Tattwas, the formation of the five elements from ether to earth begins from Agnai, with the Ether element and reaches the Swadhistanam Chakra, with the Earth element in it.

This leaves us to question the nature of element in the Mooladharam.

It is the residual part of evolution. From this, we get identified with the physical world. Yet, this very chakra is also the point from which we can mingle with Moola Prakrithi, the Primal Substance. So, the Mooladharam stands as the entrance to both worlds: the world outside us and the subtle inner world. All five elements merge here, enabling functionality with the external world.

From all the forms of Lord Ganapathi or Lord Ganesha, one is called Ucchistha Ganapathi: the ruler or presiding deity of the Mooladharam chakra. Ucchistham means the auspicious, blessed or sacred remains of either the food eaten by the Guru, or food offered to a deity: a special form of prasad. So, we come to understand that Ucchistha Ganapathi is the prasad from Creation.

When consciousness is interiorised in the Mooladharam Chakra the practitioner experiences a strong sense of grounding within himself.

Swadhisthanam

The second chakra vitally influencing our identification with the external world is the Swadhisthanam, which represents the Earth element. The worshipped presiding deities are Lord Brahma and Goddess Saraswathi, the presiding rulers over the Earth element.

The Primal nature of Swadhisthanam is related with the procreation faculty of beings. It is from here we feel the sense of 'How can I create more to strengthen and enhance my sense of "I"; my existence. How can this "I" endure even after bodily death? By having off springs, children, son, daughter, I can physically create a replica or reflection of myself that survives and continues from generation to generation.'

When our attention is externalised at the Swadhistanam, concerns related with generation and sexuality arise. And, when consciousness is directed inwards a creative nature flourishes.

Manipoorakam:

(‘Mani’ means gem; ‘poorakam’ means internal assimilation)

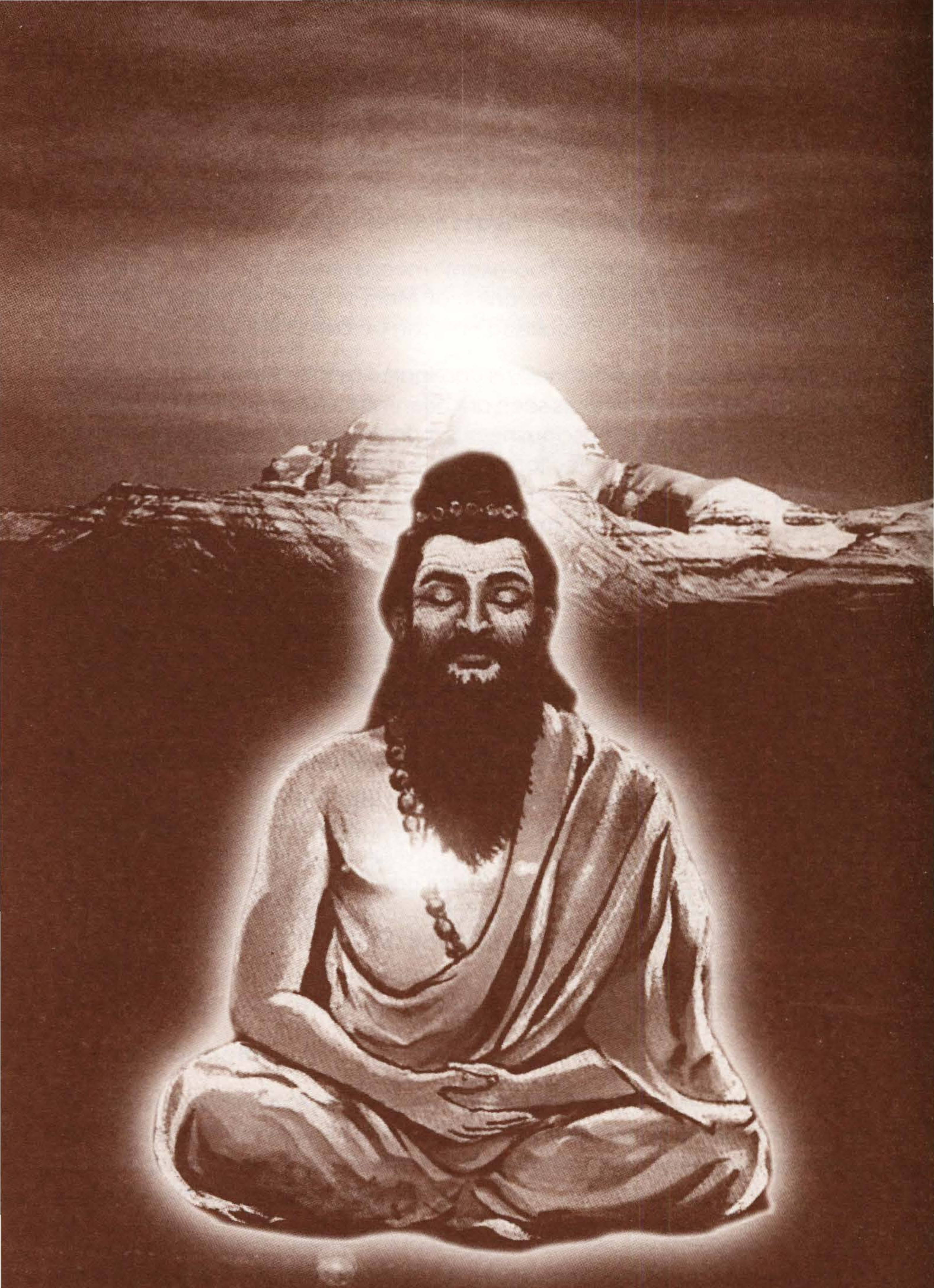
In the Pranayama practice, ‘Poorakam’ means inhalation. This chakra is distinctive in nature. The literal meaning of ‘Mani’ is ‘gem’, or crystal, implying crystallising or centring. A crystallised part can be called the gem.

In individuals where the personality is dominated by this chakra in an extrovert manner the predominant traits seen are oriented towards possessing, getting fame and power. If the consciousness is indrawn, a crystallisation of energy happens, bringing non-dissipation. It gives a perfect momentum to the rising Kundalini Sakthi. The practitioner recognises all power to be residing within him and his earlier extrovert craving completely dissolves.

Our way of living in the world today is highly dominated by the imbalanced functioning aspects of the three lower chakras. Survival anxiety imposed by the terrorism in a vulnerable situation affects and awakens the negative aspects of the Mooladharam chakra. Not adhering to the ethical values and conducting a crazy lifestyle filled with over indulgence and addictions impairs the Swadhisthanam Chakra.

This society is always in a hustle bustle and new man-made things are coming by the minute. Man wants to possess all the things that could possibly fulfil his fantasies. But man alone is not to be blamed because the high speeding world of today runs in the name of the survival of the fittest and in order to survive this mass hypnosis he finds himself driven to use the same approach of competitiveness, jealousy, power, position, fame. These neurotic tendencies mistaken as Life severely damage the inherent functioning of the Manipoorakam Chakra.





Yogic Experience

RISING FIRE

Before we understand the phenomenon of Kundalini awakening we must first understand the participating factors in the arousal of the Kundalini and their existential significance.

*“There is no lineage without the Seed, either above or below,
In what way can the Palace take shape without an architect?
You ignorant one! You sell your mother and turn her into a slave!
Where there is no emancipation, there is no Life!
Never, Never, Never!!!”*

Siva Vakkiyar Padalgal Verse -15

We cannot call Kundalini *Mother* because we sell her to a multitude of fragmentary images! To worship Her is to give Her, Her right place. This is the way to awaken the Mothers consciousness in oneself.

MAYA SUZHI - THE WHIRL OF MAYA

The extrovert function of our senses is due to energy being projected outwards, through our eyes (seeing), mouth (speech and eating), nose, (smelling and breathing the air outside)... etc.

To begin with, these are existential externalisations for our survival, which happen after birth. But, living in the over emphasised head dominated thinking world we become head-dominant people. In this way we become localised and fragmentary, excluding the remaining of 'us', and our predominant identification with the physical world is due to an over emphasised intellectual mode of living and head-dominant life.

If a person settled in this mode of identified consciousness, turns his attention within and doesn't clutch onto the physical world, the dissipating living energy along with the indrawn attention starts to accumulate in the forehead centre. This is our first encounter of our self. It then starts to revolve as a whirling energy. This whirling energy takes its course of descent through our frontal channel. This channel is called Chandran and is located in the frontal line of the body: the path of the moon as per the Oral tradition of the Siddhas.

This channel is also called the anterior channel, the descending line or procreative channel. On the other hand, the channel beginning from the Basal chakra to the eyebrow chakra is called the posterior channel or the path of the Sun. This is explained further as we go on.

In a meditative state as the attention begins to withdraw from the physical world, all externalised energies start to converge in the forehead area. The mixed energies of both externalised and indrawn consciousness first accumulate and get whirled around in the frontal centre of the forehead

between the eyebrows. As per Siddha tradition, this place is called Maya Suzhi, the whirl of Maya.

At this point as one proceeds in Dhyanam and becomes aware of the whirl of energy one may tend to misunderstand the eyebrow centre, Agnai chakra to be activated. But, this is not true. This is not Agnai activity. Agnai, the eyebrow or third eye centre, is located behind this place, within the skull. Moreover, at the Agnai chakra the energy whirls in a clockwise or centripetal direction, whereas here, at Maya Suzhi, found between the eyebrows, the wheel of motion is in an anti-clockwise direction. This should clear any misconceptions of each of these energy whirl experiences.

ABDOMINAL BRAIN

In the foetal state, our consciousness is located in the posterior channel and operates only up to the naval area in the frontal channel. Our consciousness is originally centred here. Before birth, we get our food and energy from here - through the belly button or naval (colloquially called Nabhi in Tamil). The navel is called Arutha Adaita Vassal in Siddha terminology. Arutha means 'cutting' (the umbilical cord is cut); Adaita means, it is 'blocked' (the belly connection with the mother); Vassal means 'entrance or gate'.

At birth the umbilical cord is cut. It means our psyche's connection to 'home', the place where our consciousness had been centred and through which our foetus body had been sustained, is also cut. As it is cut, our 'belly-located' consciousness gets thwarted upwards from the Manipoorakam to the Pseudo-Agnai point or the Maya Suzhi. The reason being, the newborn has to now get identified with the external world for its survival as henceforth food will be taken through the mouth and he has to recognise his mother by sight etc. This is why our consciousness gets thwarted all the way up through the frontal channel to the head region where the concept of subject and object gradually begins to manifest.

FALL OF THE 'OBJECTIVE'

In a meditative mood or lost in the divine melody of Bhajans, one forgets the world outside and eyes that earlier looked outwards due to externalisation, now carry a vacant look. As there is no identification with the eyes and the eyes don't focus on anything particular they appear to have a vacant look. (This should clarify a common misconception of a meditative state to only mean a posture seated with closed eyes.) Spontaneously the breathing also slows down. The energy that earlier moved outwards through the eyes, mouth, and nose etc., now with inward-directed attention, gathers here, between the eyebrows at the Maya Suzhi - the mid-eyebrow point in the frontal channel. The energy earlier projecting and pouring out through all the senses starts

collecting. Collecting, they mix, converge, align and begin to whirl in a counter clockwise direction. When the Maya Suzhi spins, it begins to pull downwards and the Maya Suzhi whirl starts to descend through the frontal nadi, called the path of the moon.

Usually the whirl does not descend speedily. Very rarely, for ripened individuals can it descend and settle quickly in the belly area. Or it can happen by the grace of the Guru. Commonly, for practitioners first there is a throbbing pulsation moving back and forth between the Pseudo Agnai Point and throat. As meditation deepens and the inward withdrawal within oneself graduates, these swift pulsations descend further down from the throat to the chest area. A person, carrying emotional suppression over a long period of time would undergo emotional upheavals and strong reactions when this whirl of energy hits the chest.

With continued deep meditation, the whirl of energy descends lower through the frontal channel to the belly area. This entire process of descending pulsating energy is a thrilling experience and can be described as an 'energetic inner conjugal relation within oneself'. This exhilarating experience enhances the spirit to awaken the fire in the Basal chakra. It is like the blacksmith who blows air on the fire to set it ablaze, and make it even fierier.

In the Siddha tradition, terminology often differs from context to context. For example: both the left nostril breath and the left eye are governed by the moon (lunar principle). So, while speaking of breathing, the left-nostril breath is called the lunar breath. And while speaking of pranic or energy pathways, the frontal nadi or channel (through which energy flows from Maya suzhi downward) is also called the path of the moon, Chandra kalai (kalai means fragmentary path). Likewise: the Suzhi - The counter clockwise whirling is called Ida; the clockwise whirling is called Valam (pradakshina).

One must be careful and understand in depth from a genuine Siddha Master the authentic terminology of the Siddha tradition to avoid being misled.

As meditation deepens, the Maya Suzhi descends further until it settles in the Mooladharam, the basal/root chakra. From here the prana takes the path of the posterior line or channel; the path of the sun, Surya Kalai.

Why is the frontal channel said to be of the moon?

Just as the cosmic Moon reflects light received from the Sun, similarly, our reflective awareness localised in the frontal channel gets its impetus from our centralised awareness of the posterior channel, the Sun. The Solar and Lunar symbolism is the central principle in the mysterious cult of the Siddhas. Not only that, even according to ancient Hebrew tradition the Sun is masculine and paternal and the Moon feminine and maternal; Taoist Chinese tradition considers the Sun - Yang - Hot, and the Moon - Yin - Cool.

*“The Solar breath leads to transcendence;
The Lunar breath is a form - giving substance”*

Prana Upanishads

Now we know our frontal channel is not the origin of our consciousness and instead is a dependant of the posterior channel; similar to how the Moon reflects light received from the Sun.

With deepening meditation, when the Suzhi with all its whirling nature comes down and joins in the Mooladharam, it awakens the Kundalini and the 4 petaled Mooladharam flowers completely. The practitioner loses his sense of smell temporarily. Some practitioners may experience a trembling in the whole body or only in the torso. Some may even experience suspended breathing along with profuse sweating.

Due to indrawn consciousness when the Kundalini moves again, it is along the posterior channel; the path of the Sun. Now, with its upward rising journey it begins the involution of the Tattwas.

For a moment, let us speak of the newborn state. Immediately after birth if the newborn doesn't cry, it is hung upside down and slapped on the back until it does. This is done to start the breathing process, which happens with consciousness thwarting upward in the frontal channel. The prior to birth crystallised Prana gets channelised to the head.

Interestingly, the seed of the first sound comes from the posterior channel, through the Mooladharam, into the frontal channel and up the belly. From here, sound starts to eject as an audible sound.

Focused seeing or attentiveness to the external world is not immediate for a newborn. For some duration, the newborn baby carries a vacant gaze as its attention is still directed inwards. As we play with the newborn child, its sight or attention begins to get drawn outward through its eyes in response to this play of the other.

By this, we see how our sound, breath and consciousness are interlinked. Which is why, wisely enough the Siddhas use the same. In other words, they use various breathing practices and the chanting of Mantras etc. in order to once again realise the true nature of consciousness.

*“The oracle of breath unfolds its secrets to those who know the keys.
The elements in breath are known as Fire, Water, Earth and Ether.”*

Swara Chintamani (Sanskrit work)

*“When the breath is unsteady, all is unsteady.
When the breath is still, all is still:*

*Remain Aware of the phenomena of breath, carefully.
Inhalation gives strength and a controlled body,
Retention gives steadiness of mind and longevity,
Exhalation purifies the body and emotional spirit.”*

Goraksa Sathakam (written by Gorakkar in Sanskrit)

Coming back to Yogic experience. So far, with deepening meditation we saw the indrawn prana carrying our localised consciousness into the Basal chakra. After which, it begins to move vertically upward from the Mooladharam, centre by centre, through the posterior or Sun channel.

When the Kundalini raises up from the Mooladharam chakra to the Swadhisthanam all the petals of this Chakra bloom completely and the practitioner temporarily loses his sense of taste. The Swadhisthanam chakra being the procreative chakra is innately related with ones taste buds; which explains the saying “palate and passion”. An involuntary contraction of the lower abdomen towards the backbone also happens.

Further, with the Kundalini raising to the Manipoorakam chakra our external breathing process is seen to undergo a shift or change. Inhalation and exhalation now start as Inner Pranayama or internal breathing. Obviously, the practitioner won't have nostril breath and may have some amount of heat waves in the nostrils. The shift to internal breathing represents the identifying nature to begin to completely turn within and settle to get an original identity. Until, it finds this and merges, the internal breathing process continues.

On reaching the heart chakra, Anahatam, one begins to have the first glimpses of ones subjective nature or identified consciousness having only a singular mode of perception instead of a fragmentary or multi-faceted one.

For example, if a Yogi is an earnest seeker of Lord Krishna, with his consciousness and energy localising here at Anahatam, he starts to see himself always with his beloved Lord Krishna.

Later, as consciousness or prana rises to the back of the throat area, the Visuddhi chakra, the Yogi sees his beloved Lord Krishna everywhere; to him the whole world is Krishna. Here the singular perception has taken shift to the universal singular perception. The nature of our Visuddhi chakra is creativity and not to be mistaken as the procreative nature of Swadhisthanam chakra. In the Visuddhi chakra, even though the sense of self expands to encompass the entire universe, it remains gripped to a specific mode or attribute such as the perception of Lord Krishna in this particular example. The being begins to have its 'inter-being' in the throat chakra.

In the Visuddhi Chakra state, the experience is of clean, infinite, vast spaciousness yet with a specific attribute. In other words, even though the

power of identification with form is greatly reduced, there still exists a sure but subtle veil of objectivity; 'I' and the 'other-ness'.

When the energy merges into the actual Agnai chakra inside of the skull, at the eyebrow level, there is no more an objective consciousness and is free from all attributes. A pure and attributeless consciousness holding only the subjective nature manifests here.

From here, when the entire prana of subjective consciousness finally moves above to the Brahmarandhra (in Sanskrit) or spoken of as Suzhi Munai in the Tamil Siddha tradition, the subjective consciousness flows un-ebbing and flourishes. The Brahmarandhra is said to 'open' only when the prana merges here. Until then it remains closed since our embodied consciousness is gripped externally due to always being projected outwards through the nine

orifices of the body. These nine orifices are: the two openings of the eyes, ears, nose, one of the mouth; one of the genitals, and one of the anus. When Suzhi Munai, (otherwise known as Brahmarandhra or the 'tenth hole') opens, the other nine orifices render themselves functionless.

In a nutshell, we can describe the arousal of the Kundalini in the chakras to begin at the point of Maya Suzhi, Pseudo-Agnai point, where the dissolution of objective consciousness starts and ends in the Suzhi Munai - the vortex of the dissolution of all embodied objective natures.

'Suzhi' means vortex or whirl; 'munai' means edge. This "vortex edge" is the end of the solar path. Its location is the midpoint where an imaginary line from between the eyes and another from between the ears, meet: that is Suzhi Munai or in Sanskrit Brahmarandhra. When the prana of embodied consciousness merges here at Suzhi Munai everything objective truly disappears; there is no world existing in or to our awareness.

In the fire of the third eye or in the eye of Siva the subtle body merges with the causal body and the Samskaras of all past births begin to burn.

After this is the flowering of the thousand petaled Lotus.

The flowering continues further to the Ucchi Vassal or Ucchi Kan - this means 'eye in the top' (Ucchi means top). This eye is the ethereal eye. This 'eye in the top' now blossoms. The Supreme Eye found on the crown area of the skull, becomes supremely sensitive and starts to see the inner Cosmic Space. This is the stage prior to abiding in the Ultimate Truth, in the Yogic path.

Next, the flourishing subjective consciousness in the Sahasraram has to fall to its settling place for one to vanish in the Absolute; the pre-reflective consciousness where there is no reflection of subject and object.

Consciousness comes to settle in the following possible ways:

Either the subjective consciousness descends through the Amritha Nadi and settles in the spiritual heart after cutting the Hridaya Granthi. The Siddhas call this is 'Pinda Anubava'; realisation that manifests by relinquishing the identification with the body. (Pinda means limited or form). In Pinda Anubava, there is no experience of body consciousness. For the eyes of the onlooker, consciousness can be said to have settled in the right side of the chest, the spiritual heart. Although, in Truth we cannot locate it physically or see it as a bound space since it is beyond localisation.

Or, the consciousness instead of descending down through the Amritha Nadi takes an upward course and merges upwards, 12" above the head (Dwadhasantham), with the inner cosmic space, the Source. This is called 'Anda Anubava', liberation in the unmanifested.

*"In twelve finger measure within the head,
The moving life-breath rising high,
Seeking the place of beyond sound where the Lord Dance
That verily is the sacred temple."*

Thirumanthiram Verse 2764

Siddha Kaga Busundar and Siddha Saint Ramalingam Swami speak of these two experiences with two different names: the first, Pinda Anubava, is called 'Poorvam' (meaning 'Here' or 'Primal') and the second, Anda Anubava, is called 'Utharam' (meaning beyond).

*"The eight-fold yoga, the six chakras of the body, the five states:
all have gone, erased in the infinite space of nothingness, leaving
me amazed. Drinking the white milk from the fountain of the red
rounded moon, being delighted, the unobtainable bliss has
engulfed me!"*

Siddhar Pattinathar (Pothu Padal Verse- 25)

I would like to clarify that although in this chapter we have implied consciousness to rise; move etc. we have done so only to make it easier for the reader to grasp the essence. The word consciousness has been used in reference to the journey of the re-falling of reflective consciousness to its pre-reflective state.

KUNDALINI CRISIS

The awakening of the Kundalini phenomenon is related with the search for ones true identity. A practitioner is required to be genuinely dispassionate and an earnest seeker with a true yearning for Truth, otherwise it could adversely hamper his personality, leading to an identity crisis. The rising of the Kundalini is directly co-related with the 'dropping away' of external and false identities. As his false identities flee, instinctively a longing for 'internal grounding' naturally

arises, which clearly reveals this phenomenon cannot and should not be triggered casually out of mere curiosity or by a hasty and reckless approach.

I have discussed below the usual underlying factors causing a practitioner to suffer a "Kundalini crisis" disorder.

One possibility is that the practitioner has not total detachment from clinging to the world. Nonetheless, as a little inward journey has been made, the attention and pranic energy collected inside oscillates continuously back and forth between the back and the front channels. Since the practitioner hasn't found a firm inward grounding, there is no coordination between these two channels. Thus with great speed, the prana withdrawn through Maya Suzhi gets dissipated externally.

Another possibility is that if the practitioner has strong desires or attachment towards anything outside of himself, due to the strong oscillation the stored prana is immediately dissipated through the frontal channel creating jerks in the nervous system that 'fries the nerves', causes nervous agitation, headache, burning sensation throughout the body, personality disorders etc.

A sudden depletion of prana happens as there are no centring stations along the frontal channel or the path of the moon that can contain and sustain the prana; no place for it to rest or gather. And all centring stations (chakras) are found in the posterior channel of the body; the path of the Sun. In the path of meditation, whenever we get attracted or attached to anything, the gathered prana can dissipate immediately for this reason; it has no place to rest or gather in the frontal line.

Compared to a layperson, the dissipation of energy in an earnest practitioner is much stronger and happens quite forcibly. This is why it is very important for one to keep a moderate approach towards cravings and a discriminative understanding and true dispassion towards the external world by understanding its transient nature.

Thus in the Siddhas Astanga Yoga, Yama and Niyama (proper attitude to oneself and to the outer world) have been emphasised.

Grounding can happen in two ways: one is internal and the other external. Either one should happen. An instance of finding one's ground externally as love for his Guru, personal deity or even a love for Nature. This could lead to inner grounding.

When a person suffers a Kundalini disorder, we can guide him towards feeling more centred within himself or we can guide him to experience a feeling of expansion in his surroundings (meaning he should not feel inhibited and instead experience a flow like a unobstructed river) and thereby help him to release the fluctuation in consciousness.

A Kundalini crisis is nothing but the fluctuation of identity between the external world and inner world. He can neither relate totally to his newfound inner experience and its significance, nor can he let go of it. This fluctuation in identity is the root cause for any personality crisis.

To further emphasize, the entire Kundalini crisis, inwardly, is nothing but a disharmony between the subtle (pranic body) and physical body; to resolve the crisis both the bodies need to come in harmony with one another or the individual should transcend both.

“Wherever the attention goes, energy follows; wherever energy goes, attention follows.”

The forcible dissipation of prana agitates the subtle body making it weak and sometimes vulnerable to hostile forces, due to the hole created.

On the other hand, when one is settled within oneself the prana from the posterior channel goes upward, chakra by chakra and at each centre our identification with the personal 'I' and the world, lessens.

Every centre has its own mode of identification with the outer world. As de-identification happens gradually, one's narrowed consciousness gets transcended from chakra to chakra, through the path of the sun.

Let us review a case study:

So far I have treated 12 cases related to Kundalini crisis, of which only one patient was an Indian the rest were foreigners. I will speak about one case of peculiar nature.

'She was a 29 year old Swedish girl. Due to her weak constitution she couldn't travel all the way to Tamil Nadu to meet me, hence I flew to Mumbai where she had arrived after taking a direct flight from Sweden. I had to treat her in Mumbai itself. She was scheduled to stay for three months.

The gentleman who directed her to me said via phone that his friend needed help. He had not clarified any details regarding her suffering. All I knew was that she had been suffering various symptoms over a long period of 8-9 years. And she had spent the last two years confined to a psychiatric ward in a local Swedish hospital, taking sleeping pills every night, worsening her condition. Due to the intensity of pain in her body, she had attempted to commit suicide twice. With this, much information regarding my new patient I had gone to Mumbai in hope of treating her.

I visited her at her room. She seemed an extremely introvert personality and wasn't open to conversation easily. She had darkened the room and had shut all ventilation. I asked her what the problem was. Her reply was clear. She said if I were to cure it, it was for me to diagnose it. I checked her pulse and her aura. Her pulse showed a severely

stagnated Vatha upwards, from the thoracic region to the head. The aura above her head appeared brownish and smoky. Another mode of diagnosis I used was to check the odour of the subtle body. I felt a 'frying' odour, instantly indicating a complete depletion of 'Ojas', by the Pitta (fire). She wouldn't allow me to 'sense' her deeper. She explained she was unable to tolerate any close proximity, as it instantly agitated her body. So I waited. I didn't draw up any rash conclusions, as it was too early.

We spoke lightly on her other subjects, whether she has visited India before etc. As evening came, she didn't allow any lights to be turned on, or any fan. All of a sudden, I could hear her sighing heavily and emitting crying sounds for a few minutes. Suddenly she let out terrorizing full-bodied screams and waved her hands about upwards. Her body was trembling. Seeing this, I approached her. Even without looking up at me, she shouted to me not to come any further as she could not bear it. I stopped. I continued to observe her from where I was. I saw her aura had changed from brownish to yellowish to a sky blue. Her crying, which earlier was filled with suffering was now of 'prayerful' nature. And I saw her hand formations were performing Indian 'Mudras', speedily but gracefully, as done in Ancient Tantric rituals when invoking a deity. As these formations started her, screams reduced.

This left me spell bound and astounded. I recalled in our afternoon conversation she had mentioned she has never been to India and she had whatsoever no knowledge of Indian spirituality. She had come here for the first time only to try and cure her problems as recommended by her friend. She also had no interest in visiting other places in this trip.

I patiently watched her for some time. By this time I had gained insight of the cause of her suffering. With the surging graceful touch of my Guru flowing in my heart, I gently confronted her, saying, 'You cannot cheat me! I have caught you.'

I gently explained to her slowly and step by step about her entire experience that even I had witnessed. I told her the involuntary hand formations were Indian Mudras and she was performing them without any understanding. These were directly related to her inner energy phenomena. She was surprised to know she had inherited this from her past life. She listened silently to all I had to say to her. As I was leaving the room, I told her I would need some time to deal with the phenomena she was undergoing. As I turned to leave, she asked me whether she should take her usual sleeping tablets. I asked her why. She impulsively reacted and shouted saying otherwise she would spend the rest of the night in the way I had just seen her. I said ok and left. The phenomena she experienced by itself wasn't a negative

one, but the side effects it had needed to be brought to balance. Suffering these side effects over many years had made her very thin and overly sensitive to light, to the sound of the fan, and had made her rigidly close herself away from the world. She would experience heavy irritation even talking with anybody. All these reactions were due to the blazing fire eating into her nourishing 'Ojas of tissues'.

The next morning, she was sleeping. She awoke at around 11 am. She ate a little more than half of an 'Indian bread' and left the rest. I advised her to have some pomegranate juice along with that. I felt her opening up for a conversation but she didn't initiate it so I spent a few hours reading by myself. Around 3 pm. She started screaming again. And the whole experience I had witnessed last night was relived. As she screamed, I heard the word 'Mother'. With my Guru's ever flowing and abundant compassion, I approached her once again. This time standing closer to her than last night, with my right hand I made wave like downward movements on her back cervical area, without touching her and continued to speak to her consolingly. I said 'Even I like the Cosmic Mother, but the fire of aspiration in you to call on the Cosmic Mother is overwhelming you beyond your inner ground'. As we continued, she began performing involuntary Mudras. I asked her 'how do you feel your Mother?' She didn't reply. Instead, she said my voice was having a soothing influence over her. This was the first positive sign I had got. She asked me to go on speaking to her, as she felt a melting sensation occurring within her. Gradually she relaxed. Other than a few tears, welling up she was not crying like last night.

Before leaving her for the night, I advised her not to take any pills and to just try and relax without making a conscious effort to fall asleep. In case she couldn't sleep then she could take her pills.

On the morning of the third day, she said she tried to relax but later had to take her pills to fall asleep. I had decided today I could start implementing certain remedial measures. I must add here that people undergoing Kundalini crisis need an affectionate treatment, filled with love and care. This aspect remains untouched in the scope of the modern day approach of curing.

Secondly, I already knew her inner grounding had been hampered due to the agitated Vatha in her entire nervous system, which was why I had to direct her towards an external grounding. She needed to find some meaning to her life in relation with the external world so that she could channelise the accumulated fiery energy and find a balance between her 'upper world' and this physical one.

Drinking hot water frequently would pacify the agitated Vatha imbalance. Placing the Rasa Mani (mystical Mercury bead) on specific

parts of the body triggers pranic exchange in the body. In this case, the Rasa Mani would need to be placed on the naval area. It would enhance the divergence required for the functioning of the 5 Pranas in the Manipoorakam chakra.

Please note this remedy cannot or should not be undertaken personally by purchasing a mercury bead in the market as it can act as poison for the skin, causing damage to the system.

Application of medicated Herbal Oils prepared based on Siddha Tradition, can neutralise the accumulated and stagnated Vatha and pacify the aggravated Pitta. An important point in this case was that as the Solar nadi was predominantly causing the imbalance it needed to be brought to balance by activating the predominant functioning of the Lunar Nadi, and preventing the tendency of the downward moving vital air (Apana) mixing with the upward moving vital air (Prana). In other words, to bring a balance, the excessive accumulation of prana in the head region would need to be diverted and settled in the Mooladharam chakra while taking an anti clockwise direction. This was performed by undertaking the use of Vaasi Gathi application; a unique feature of Siddha Tradition.

Due to the overly sensitive Heart chakra opening only towards the higher realms and on the other hand remaining extremely closed to the outer world and fellow beings she couldn't experience any oneness with them. Imbibing the seed of love and compassion in her and enabling her feel, a sense of expansion in relation with the world and her fellow beings would nourish her and give meaning to her life and a will to live here.

After the third day, her intake of sleeping pills was replaced by Herbal medicines. By the fifth day, it was possible for her to be outdoors in daytime. Within the week, she was responding to the treatment and recovering speedily.

I waited until the 10th day to introduce her body to medicines that would rejuvenate her constitution, by the way of Kalpa Medicines. She would have to continue this course of herbal medicines for 3 months to allow all the vital organs to strengthen and be rejuvenated.

On her 12th day she left for Sweden, equipped with medicines for 3 months, feeling grateful and carrying a openness for a new beginning, free of suffering.'

Apart from the treatment and the aligning of the subtle body functions, I would whole-heartedly like to emphasize the most valuable underlying factor or the ONE behind the scene is the boundless Grace of my Sat Guru without whom, this miracle wouldn't have come into existence.

This grace continues. It's been 5 years since. Her journey in life continues smoothly, spiritually as well as in other aspects.

BALANCING KUNDALINI CRISIS

As a Kundalini Crisis involves several factors, I am unable to share all remedies, as they are largely based on each individual and many are used for the nature of subtle work. I have shared something basic here that could help in the early stages, by which further complexities may be avoided. But, for someone suffering chronic disorders, undertaking any Asanas or physical exercise may aggravate the problem instead of pacifying it. The holy touch of the Gnani can pacify it.

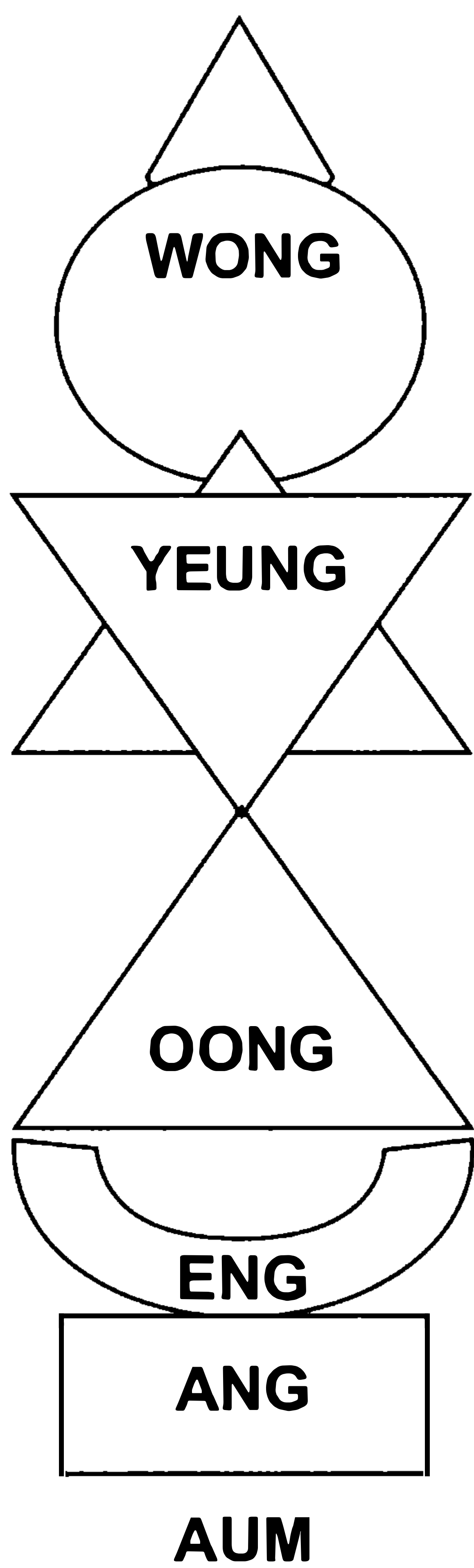
PHYSICAL EXERCISE

This exercise gives flexibility to the entire spine and the energy (prana) stagnated in the central channel can move to the lunar and solar nadis (energy pathways). If this exercise is done regularly, it helps heal a slipped disc in any part of the spinal (cord) column. Please note: an individual of Vatha imbalanced Kundalini disorder must not undertake this exercise, as it would aggravate the problem instead of reducing it.

Stand erect with your feet slightly apart, arms by your side. Now bring the arms forward to shoulder level with your fingertips touching. Take a deep breath and holding your breath gently turn the upper half of your body slowly towards the left. Return your body to the centre; lower the arms to your sides and exhale. Repeat the exercise, now turning slowly to the right. Do this exercise three to four times in one session. Three sessions (with five minutes gap in between) are enough.

CHAKRA SUDDHI / PANCHA BHUTA DHYANAM

This practise involves chanting of seed mantras specific to each element in each of the chakras in order to align the functioning of elements and the functioning of the prana in them. Given below is a diagram describing the symbol of each element and its corresponding seed mantra to make it easy for the practitioner to visualise and follow.



HOW TO PRACTICE CHAKRA SUDDHI / PANCHA BHUTA DHYANAM

First, one should utter the sound ‘AUM’, intoning it slowly and continuously, prolonging until one’s breath can sustain. There should be no holding of the breath at any time. In this manner, one must intone this sound calmly, keeping the attention in the Mooladharam, where chakra suddhi first takes place. Hear and feel the sound and the resonance of ‘AUM’ (and later, each subsequent sound in its corresponding chakra) remaining aware of how each tone resonates and affects it. Keeping the same, awareness proceed with each seed mantra in its related chakra.

To attain visible results one must continue this practise in the following manner.

It should be undertaken twice a day, first at dawn and the other at dusk, for a period of 48 days regularly. One session of 9 repetitions in the morning and a second session in the evening must be performed. This would help all the elements in the chakras to be purified. In the 48 days a total of 96 sessions would take place. Consequently, all the nadis, and the organs associated with each chakra begin to function at their optimum level, keeping the practitioner in good health.

Chakras, Syllables and Elements

Mooladharam	- Aum	Foundation
Prithivi Tattwa(Swadhistanam)	- ang	Earth
Ap Tattwa (Manipoorakam)	- Eng	Water
Agni (Anahatam)	- Oong	Fire
Vayu (Visuddhi)	- Yeung	Air
Akash (Agnai)	- Wong	Ether
		(According to Siddha system)

One should pronounce AUM in the Mooladharam (basal chakra), Ang in Swadhistanam and so forth, finally culminating with WONG in Agnai at the eyebrow centre.

Alchemical Herbal Tincture of Lotus Thamarai Ooral (Medicinal wine of lotus flower)

This tincture is for pacifying the imbalance caused by Kundalini crisis and balancing the function of the third eye.

Preparation of the Tincture:

- Use two handfuls of fresh white (or red) lotus flowers.
- Use the petals, buds

Dry them overnight in an oven at low temperature (slow drying is better).

Break the dried petals up into small pieces, place them into a jar, and cover them with clear, pure drinking alcohol.

Place a lid on the jar, and let it stand in a warm place for about a week. (A month is better, unless the affected person cannot wait that long).

Shake the jar at least once a day.

After at least seven days (30 days is better) pour the tincture through two layers of coffee filters into a sterilized jar.

Press out as much of the liquid as you can from the lotus mass and add it to the filtered tincture.

This crude tincture of lotuses should be helpful in neutralizing the agitated prana - and pacifying the resulting headache, whole-body burning sensation, insomnia etc.

Instructions for intake:

First, put a few drops on the tongue and let it mix with saliva, then swallow.

If the usage of alcohol is a problem, dilute the tincture with mineral water 1:5

If you add the salt of the lotus to the tincture, it will make it much stronger and it will also be an alchemical tincture and help balance the function of the eyebrow centre. (This calcinations process will produce some unwanted smoke so if ventilation is a problem, simply use the crude tincture).

Preparation of Lotus Salts to make the above tincture more potent:

Dry the lotus mass to remove the residual alcohol before putting it in the oven. Bake it at a high degree until it is completely dark brown.

Grind it with a pestle into a fine powder.

Then, bake as before at high temperature until the colour changes to pale brown.

Then again grind it. Now it should turn grey in colour.

It is best to use a cheap, small electric oven.

Place the grey powder on two layers of coffee filter paper, then pour an adequate amount of hot distilled water over it.

Take this water and put it into a dish, then place in a very slow oven until all water has evaporated.

When all the water has evaporated, the salts of lotuses would have crystallized in the bottom of the dish.

If these salts are not pure white, then put them again into the oven, on high temperature and then grind with a pestle.

Put the salts again into two coffee filters, and pour an adequate amount of hot water over them.

Evaporate as before.

This time, the crystals should be pure white.

Combining the tincture with the Salts:

Add the crystals to the tincture and shake at least once each day to blend. This will take many days, till the crystals have dissolved into the tincture. (Alternately, pulverizing the crystals before adding to the tincture).

Combined Instructions for intake of potent tincture and for inner alchemical process:

Place a few drops of the alchemical tincture on the tongue, and let this mix with saliva.

Inhale a breath of air, and separate the pranic vibration from the air. As you inhale, allow some of the vapours to go from the mouth into the lungs.

When you exhale, the lotus essence rises up into your head and saliva is produced.

When the lotus tincture is thoroughly mixed with saliva from this circulation, swallow the tincture/ saliva and circulate the energy for a few rotations: down through the frontal channel (moon pathway) to the Mooladharam (basal chakra), and up through the posterior (sun pathway) channel. Finally, passing through the eyebrow point, descend again through the frontal channel (moon path again).

When you do this regularly, the Ojas part can be distilled from Amritha (nectar) and will start to mingle in to the basic seven tissues, rejuvenating them.

Duration:

One must take this tincture once to a maximum of 3 times in the morning and one to 3 times in the evening.(dawn and dusk). This must be continued for 21 days. One would see results in a few days but to stabilise this change one must continue this for 21 days.

Here I have prescribed only one alchemical preparation, considering this topic is beyond the aim of this book.



ALCHEMY - Internal and External

Alchemy, the hidden science of Mystery, speaks only in cryptic terms and a story holds greater power to elucidate not only the knowledge of alchemy but also its true spirit, in the place of a literal explanation.

RISYA - THE REMINDER OF OUR LOST SPIRIT

From a tiny, tiny patch in the otherwise large and looming forest was heard noise! The forest air was filled with tiny, feeble but shrill squeaks, snorts and sniffs and the hurried sounds of tiny scampering feet. It came from a small village - the Rat Village; a marked terrain hidden beneath thick bushes and tall wild grass - it was their land; their home.

Inhabited by many, many rat families it was a crowded rat community; a community that revered a Head, Elders, young ones and all.

It was common protocol, a long established and honoured norm, not to venture beyond the boundaries of the thicket. The rest of the forest remained strictly forbidden and unexplored for there lay along with the many unknown dangers a known one - the Eagles circled above. Each and every rat of the rat community had grown up learning and knowing to fear the soaring eagles ready and waiting to prey on them; so had their fathers and grandfathers and so would their children! Generations had come and gone inheriting the conditioned terror and not one had endeavoured out of the thicket and walked to see open sky.

Risya was one of them. An active, playful and energetic rat, he was always ready to have some fun. Risya's heart was gentle, kind and caring. But, like any other rat in the village, he too was always busy scurrying about in search of food, running hither thither all day long, sniffing out places and digging little burrows in the earth. But, other than these routinely doings, Risya's mind nurtured an added interest, a curiosity for the enigmatic touch of Life. His perspective, unlike the others of the village was a bit more far reaching. Now and then, he would be overcome by an inquisitiveness to know what lay beyond The Boundaries.

One day Risyā was scurrying around. It was like any other day when his sharp ears heard something that made him stop. He stopped dead in his tracks, pricked up his ears and listened. He listened hard as it grew louder - it was a roar... 'ROAR'... Risyā's heart beat loudly and eyes grew wide. He listened in sheer astonishment for it was like nothing he had ever heard before. Lifting his able nose, he sniffed the air carefully. His nose twitched and turned trying hard to pick up a telling smell. But, then the sound slowly faded away and stopped. He had no idea of where it had come from or what it was. A little alarmed by the strange incident, he looked around to see if any other of his brother and sister rats had heard it.

Nothing had changed around him. No one had stopped dead like he had. Everybody was scampering around as usual - doing what they always did. Unable to stop himself, Risyā asked his neighbouring rat whether he had heard anything strange. He hadn't. Then he asked another friend... he hadn't either. Soon Risyā realised he was the only rat in the whole rat village who had heard 'the sound' - the 'Roar'. He thought it strange!

Well, the sound had faded away and Risyā couldn't do much about it now, so he went on with his mediocre life, and mediocre ways, doing his mundane activities all day long; life was passing by again.

A few days passed. It happened again. Once again, the bewildered rat stood transfixed in his place. It was the same 'Roar' he had heard the other day! Risyā listened hard. The sound was enthralling and this time he didn't feel so afraid as the time before. Then again, it faded away and left, bringing back the old and familiar sounds of the forest to fill Risyā's sharp ears again. But it didn't leave Risyā's mind.

Risyā couldn't stop thinking about it. The thoughts and memory of the sound twice heard wouldn't leave him. He wondered and pondered about what it was, where it came from, and why hadn't anybody else heard it? Why was he the only rat that had heard it? Was there something wrong with him? All these questions circled and haunted Risyā's little head until finally he did the unthinkable. He took a bold, bold step - the kind never taken before by any other rat in the whole of Rat Village. Risyā decided to go beyond The Boundary in search of the 'Roar'. He was to do the unheard of!

All the other rats looked aghast at his decision. Their whiskered mouths opened wide. They glanced at each other, exchanging enquiring looks. Shrill voices rang out from the community crowd, 'Nobody has ever gone beyond The Boundary'. 'It is unheard of.' 'You are walking

to your death.' Risyā, don't be foolish, how can you face the unknown.'
'Brother, don't be foolish, don't throw your life away.' 'Young man, listen to the elders, they know what is best for you, don't go.'

Risyā stood silent.

Some noses turned away in disgust at his outright disobedience. Some eyes grew wide with fear at the thought of the danger that lay ahead. All in all they thought him foolish and crazy. And it didn't take long before most of the village made Risyā into a laughing stock. They mocked at poor Risyā.

Not one voice concurred with his. But Risyā stood firm. He knew he had to find the 'Roar'.

He set off early next day. They stood whispering amongst themselves, smirking and laughing, as Risyā walked by. Scurrying into the forest, they watched him cross The Boundary. The Search had begun.

Novel sights met Risyā's eyes. He looked around, amazed at the novelty of the forest. Away from the familiar old sounds of the Rat village the forest stood in a tremendous Silence. The grandeur of it all left Risyā wonderstruck. He had never been out of the rat village and what he saw now filled his heart with marvel and awe. Risyā felt happy. He felt free. Risyā kept walking.

Suddenly, scampering around one bush Risyā stumbled onto a strange, strange animal, something he had never seen before. Taken aback Risyā stared at the queer yet beautiful creature before him. It was so different from him. Bigger! But Risyā didn't fear so easily and felt the creature meant no harm so he bravely spoke up, 'Hello, my name is Risyā, the rat. Who are you?' The graceful animal came forward and called himself the Deer. He said, 'They call me 'Runner from the Masses''. Both stood in the greens of the forest exchanging friendly words. The Deer enquired, 'what are you doing so far from Rat Village? There are many dangers.'

Hesitatingly Risyā narrated his story explaining how he had set off in search of the 'Roar'. He was afraid the Deer would laugh and mock at him as the entire rat community had. But to his surprise the Deer smiled and said, 'I can take you there.' Risyā was overjoyed at the Deer's words. He happily agreed and together they walked into the unknown of the forest.

For Risyā this was a wonderful journey. His heart felt lifted, light and wide, wide open. Excited by every little thing he saw and smelt the brave little rat, far off from rat village, took in every new feeling, new sight, new smell and each new sound with great joy and eagerness.

Soon Risyā and his newly found mate, the Deer, could hear the faint sound of the Roar. As they walked on the sound of the Roar grew louder and stronger. It didn't fade away anymore. It stayed with them as they continued their journey.

As the sound grew closer and closer, Risyā fell silent! He felt the 'Roar' was calling.

Passing a bend, suddenly, without warning, within a fraction of a moment, they were met by a deafening sound and a sight that completely took Risyā by surprise. His heart skipped a beat. They had reached the place of the Roar.

Risyā found himself standing right before the Roaring River. Deafened by the sound and over-whelmed by the sight Risyā merely stood there, unable to move or utter a single word. He had reached!

Risyā felt the 'Roar' strongly saying something... he turned and asked the Deer, 'What is it the 'Roar' is saying?' The Deer laughed a sweet laugh and urged Risyā to follow him. He led Risyā to meet a new friend.

She sat on a leaf - a fresh green leaf! The Deer walked up to her and introduced Risyā. Then bidding goodbye to both, the Deer left the two new friends to get to know each other.

Risyā had never seen a frog before. Her very sight struck him. His gaze didn't leave her as he she leapt high in the air and then to Risyā's complete surprise she jumped right into the river and out right before his puzzled eyes. He thought she was terrific! She could go everywhere. He looked shyly at her and asked, 'who are you? Both land and water is home for you?'

She smiled back and replied, 'Yes, they are both home for me. I am a frog. I can live in both. The Elders call me 'Oceanic Moon''. Risyā also politely introduced himself. He explained he was a rat from the Rat Village far, far away. Coyly he confessed he had never quite met anyone like her before, someone who could live on both, land and water. The frog smiled at his honesty and innocence.

Gathering some courage, Risyā asked, 'I felt the Roar saying something, something I couldn't grasp, can you help me?'

She didn't reply at first.

Instead she leapt about and Risyā watched on in silent wonder. She then quietly turned and looked to where he stood and asked, 'Do you want a food that sprouts from the earth and reaches the skies?' She paused a moment, 'Will you listen to what I say?' The keen Risyā

eagerly asked, 'What is that food?' Oceanic Moon replied, 'The food the elders took and became The Elders'. But, Risyā still didn't understand. He was just about to sprout a new question when the frog spoke, 'Crouch down low, as low as you can go, then jump up high, as high as you can try!'

So Risyā crouched down low, as low to the earth as he could go and then jumped up high, as high as all his strength could try. To his disbelief and astonishment, Risyā found himself up in the air...so high as he had never ever been before. He was almost flying... something ordinarily not known to him. From here, Risyā saw the river down below, he saw how the land looked from up above ... and suddenly his eyes turned and he saw 'the Holy Mountain' with its oracle of golden rays.

The sight of the holy mountain stunned him. It put him in place of such awe, awe even greater than what he had felt on first seeing the Roaring River.

In that moment, Risyā became ever so happy that he entirely forgot everything else. He forgot the Frog seated below, he forgot the Roar, but most of all he forgot he was up, up in the air! Suddenly Risyā found himself falling; falling downwards with great, great speed. He looked down just in time to see his widely spread arms and legs closing in and touching the rushing waters of the Roaring River flowing below and within moments he got swirled away under the fast speeding waters.

Below the waters, Risyā struggled. He was drowning and gulping water fast. Frantically waving his arms and legs, Risyā somehow managed to push himself to the surface of the water and out popped his head, desperately gasping for air. Swimming with all his might, in one way or another he managed to touch the riverbank and cling on for his dear life. Risyā climbed out.

Drenched to the bone, tired and completely shaken up, Risyā fell to the earth exhausted but relieved. He saw the frog. A sudden rage of anger welled up in him filling him with a new energy and he jumped up shouting aloud, 'Are you crazy, what did you ask me to do. I could have died.' She smiled and waited until Risyā finished shouting all he could. Then she gently asked him, 'Risyā do you remember what you saw?'

Risyā instantly grew silent. And his whole demeanour changed. He whispered, 'Yes...' He had seen the Holy Mountain. A sight that had captured his tiny little rat heart! Risyā knew he had been blessed. All his anger dissolved and a warm feeling of love filled his entire being.

The frog said, 'What the roaring river murmured was an invitation to its Home, that Holy Mountain, the Eldest Ancestor'.

In a strong and forceful voice, Oceanic Moon declared, 'Risya, now you are the Jumping Rat.'

Exhilarated by this adventure and the unbelievable vision Risya thanked the frog profusely and overwhelmed by the new vision, hurriedly scampered back all the way to his tiny little Rat Village to share this with his entire rat community. But Risya was to be met by a rude, rude shock.

He reached there dripping, drenched, panting but all smiles and happy. The rats stopped and turned to look at approaching Risya. They stared at his ragged condition and all of them stopped doing what they were doing. Their noses lifted up to smell. He smelt different! Once again, they exchanged looks. Something had changed!

Risya in his panting voice eagerly shared everything he had seen and everything that had happened with him to the nearest detail. His voice sounded strong, calm, and penetrated into the very hearts of all, present there, but... to his perplexity no one, no one was ready to believe and accept what penetrated their hearts in that moment. They hurriedly refused the rippling changes that stirred the stagnant waters of their conditioning, not allowing their torpidity to be made volatile.

Instantly their inner refusal reflected as adverse reaction to what Risya had brought. Some completely ignored him and some walked away. Some grew angry and shouted rude remarks at him, 'He is an outcast and he abandoned the village. He no more belongs to our racial trait.'

Deep, deep inside, each rat secretly wondered how he, had not been eaten by Them! But nobody dared speak it aloud.

Sad and broken-hearted Risya listened to the different words thrown at him and at his brave, brave act. Finally, unable to bear the feeling of being rejected and shunned anymore, along with the anguish of standing alone, Risya made a big, big compromise. He chose to walk back into his own rattrap - a mechanical and mediocre living with the masses.

With his head hung low Risya re-entered his same Old World and began to live as he always had. He followed the same vegetative routine, did the same habitual activities and life was no different from before he had left, but for one thing. This time Risya found himself unable to live this vicious routine. He was not happy. He didn't feel at

home anymore. The confused little rat struggled to pull through each passing day. Grappling with emotions of sadness he encountered his aloneness, and life felt incomplete. Even though he tried hard to push his head down, it refused... Risyā was caught between two worlds.

Lonely in his sorrow and grief Risyā found no one to turn to. None of the rats came to care for him in his suffering; none recognised the pain in his heart. Risyā watched, as all they did all day was to sniff around in search of food, keeping their heads down low, very busy and gossiping amongst each other, telling tales.

Risyā tried and tried; until he could try no more. The emptiness overtook him and he found himself failing miserably in his pretence. Risyā couldn't pretend anymore. He stopped sniffing with all the others and retreated to one corner of the village, sitting idle, alone.

On one such day as he sat in idleness, darkness was gently falling around him when a sudden roar filled his ears. It shook him beyond the boundaries of his idleness. It filled his heart and entire being. The exhilarating memories poured and flowed. Risyā shed tears of joy.

In this tearful and joyful moment, each tear he shed, turned into climbing inspiration. He was taken in by a sudden revelation, 'If ten fools criticise one person, then that person must surely be on the right track'.

Risyā jumped up. Strong and anew! Gone was his idleness. Gone was his sorrow. He had decided something for himself. The Mountain was calling.

Risyā didn't waste any time. Early next day, while the others were busy doing their sniffing activities, Risyā slowly and steadily walked through them all, breaking ties with their grasping eyes. He walked on and watched his family, friends, loved ones turn into mediocre memories of the past as he passed.

Spread before Risyā was the vast and deep forest and another unknown journey. It was a silence, but a terrifying one. He felt watched even by the trees as he walked through the dense greens. A sudden thought disturbed the hanging silence. 'The eagles'. He felt an overwhelming fear engulf him and for a moment he halted in his tracks, almost sure the eagles were already above. His vulnerability hung around him like a shadow, going everywhere with him. Although he had left his entire village behind, the fear had stuck with him.

But Risyā didn't stop for more than a moment. He still had bushes around him into which he could run and hide.

Soon the tall trees were thinning out showing more and more open sky. He knew the time for real danger had come. He had reached the outskirts of the density and now what lay ahead were the vast barren plains. There was nowhere to hide. The eagles were above. How would he make it? Would he make it? Risyā continued holding only one choice in hand - he had to cross the plains.

A strange thought dropped into Risyā, 'If I have to see the Mountain I need to fly high in the sky, in the sky where there are eagles... How can that ever happen, it is a paradox. 'Danger' and 'the Calling-Home' lay, as the same place, so close to each other.'

Holding his beating heart firmly, Risyā stepped out of the sheltering trees and tall grass and felt the sun beating down hard on his head and back. He knew he was not safe anymore. Seeing an isolated bush a short distance away, Risyā scampered there and dived under. Safe! Peeking out from it, he noticed another. Scurrying to it, he hid himself. A few such bushes helped him on.

All of a sudden, as he rushed into one such bush, Risyā noticed two equally surprised eyes peering back at him from the darkness. He knew those eyes. They were of a rat! How unexpected to find a rat in these parts. Risyā spoke first. 'Hello, my name is Risyā, who are you?' A rat voice replied, 'I am the Old Rat. What are you doing so far from the rat village? Are you lost?'

Risyā, once again, hesitatingly shared his story with the Old Rat. The old rat smiled in an understanding way and spoke, 'Risyā, when something new begins to emerge it has to pass through three stages before it fulfils its purpose and attains its fullest form. It first confronts the teasing Masses. When the masses see a new rising, their foremost instinct is to ridicule and mock at it. This way they ignore and shove away what comes at them with an unknown strength. Soon after when they discover it still survives to grow more, their casual indifference and mockery climbs its way to a vehement opposition. Their refusal to it is forceful; their anger towards it is not hidden anymore. It has managed to make the difference within them. They don't like this. It has begun to matter! We can say the unknown strength with which the new rising emerged has reached far enough for them to feel their being carried by it. This is what they don't want and fear. But a final and inevitable turning point stands as the last stage in this phenomenon. Their acceptance! Whatsoever was put through their dislike and tease, whatsoever was mauled by their words in protest, they receive. So never-mind what has happened with you so far. It has its own course. You are more than welcome to come live here with me. There is plenty of room in the bush. Here we are safe from the hunting eyes of the eagles above.'

It was a dear scene as the Old Rat shared himself with Young Risyā. They had already spoken late into the night when Risyā asked the Old Rat how he had come to live in the plains. Out poured a story of long, long ago. 'A long time ago I belonged to the Rat village way down south from where you come from. One day as I was sniffing for food I heard a 'Roar'. I was stunned, even afraid. It grew loud and then even louder. I couldn't move until it had completely faded away. But even after it faded, I didn't forget it. And for good reason too, for it came back. It kept frequenting but only to me. So, ultimately I approached our village Head. He confided, 'Yes, I have heard stories of it from our ancestors. They said it is a River, and the sound is, the Call of the River. It is known to be eternally calling. Calling all of us, all the time, but only the few open hearted ones can hear its Call, and even fewer are the ones who answer it. The ones', who do embark on The Journey, are not known to be seen or heard of again.' After I had heard about the River and its Call, I felt the strongest urge to answer the Call. I left, ignoring the angry protests of my fellow rats. On the way, I was often chased and threatened by the eagles and had to run into hiding. I lost my way. Whenever I lost my way I admit contemplating returning back to the Village while I was still alive. But until I hadn't seen the enchanting Roaring River, I didn't want to return. So I kept going, taking each step forward slowly and cautiously. Well, there is not more to tell. This took me many long years. But at last, I reached the Roaring River. It was something indescribable. I felt I regained all the lost years. And now I hear the Elders call me, 'Hair on Fire', but I am not, I couldn't be it...'

His face suddenly fell heavy with sadness and he stopped talking. He sat there lost in thought for a long, long while. Risyā had listened keenly. But all the while Risyā had been waiting to hear about the Mountain. He now wondered why the Old Rat's story had stopped short of the Mountain. Why hadn't he spoken of it?

He couldn't contain himself anymore. He asked, 'Did you ever see the Holy Mountain, the Eldest Ancestor?' All of a sudden the Old Rat's face wore a twisted look and he abruptly finished, saying, 'Never mind all that now, it's all myth and legend. Take some rest. It is late.'

That was that. It was the end of the subject for the night, but Risyā couldn't sleep. He lay awake all night, pondering the story he had heard and what it meant for him. Thoughts of the Mountain didn't leave him all night. He couldn't let it go. However, he did wonder how the Old Rat had relaxed and pushed aside The Journey. He knew he couldn't. He had to go on. So, Risyā stayed the night in the comfort of shelter but was ready and waiting for the wee hours of the sun so that he could be on his way.

After offering gratitude for the hospitality shown by the Old Rat, Risyā set off. He had gently explained that although the Old Rat's offer was kind and generous, Risyā couldn't accept, as he knew he must find the place he feels at Home. Initially, the Old Rat had been reluctant to let him go, fearing the immense danger ahead. Further, down the plains the bushes got scantier and scantier, the vulnerability heightened to its most. It was not easy for the Old Rat to see Young Risyā go. Risyā was ready for it all. He had kept only one choice for himself. There was no other way but ahead.

Risyā could see the eagles circling far, far above in the sky. Keeping his eyes on the ground ahead and his sharp ears wide open, he scampered along the open plains, finding a bush or two to take shelter for a moment and then to move on again. Suddenly loomed ahead of him a white mound. Almost like a little hill of a sort. Intrigued, Risyā wove around to investigate. As he scurried along, his eyes met with another pair eyes, large brown eyes. It is an animal! There was so much pain in those eyes, Risyā thought. Instantly his heart reached out to the strange creature lying there.

Risyā edged closer. Politely introducing himself he said, 'Hello, I am Risyā the rat. Who are you? And what has happened?'

There came a feeble response to his questions. 'I am a camel, a white camel. I am soon to die.' Risyā's heart wept tears for the grand animal. 'It's a pity the big white camel was to die', he thought. He sat there beside the waning animal, speaking soothing words. Unable to bear the anguishing state of the Camel any longer Risyā felt a rising hope to help, if he could. He asked, 'Is there something I can do for you? Is there any way I can help you feel better?'

In a pained voice the Camel said, 'Yes, actually there is. The only way I can get better is if I get the eye of a rat. That can heal me.'

Stepping aside Risyā fell deep into thought for the next few moments. Seeing the suffering of the Camel had greatly troubled his heart and he truly wished to see him healed. Now he knew how that could happen, even though it meant being blind in one eye. Risyā felt ready to give it to his ailing friend. He thought to himself he would still have his other eye, and that can't be so bad.

Returning to the Camel's side Risyā told him that he would be glad to give him his eye if it meant he would be well again. As soon as these words rose from Risyā's lips, out jumped his right eye from his body! Miraculously, in that very instant the Camel rose from the earth where he lay in pain just a few moments ago. The Camel was healed.

Standing there strong and tall once again, the Camel expressed the immense gratitude he felt towards Risyā. Risyā was taken aback seeing the size of the standing Camel. 'Risyā, you are my brother,' so spoke the Camel. Then he enquired why Risyā was wandering the dangerous plains, away from the shelter of the forest and so far from his family. And Risyā, once again shared his tale. Having reached thus far he knew he must move on again.

The Camel told Risyā he would need to cross the vast barren plains to go to the Holy Mountain and would have to confront the great danger of the eagles. Risyā nodded in agreement. Another surprise awaited Risyā. The Camel offered to help him in return for the kindness Risyā had shown. He offered to walk him way up to the far edge of the plains. He explained Risyā could walk under him, between his legs, in his shadow, hidden from the preying eyes of the eagles. That way none of the eagles would spot him and he would be safe. Knowing it would have been difficult to travel the great distance with only one good eye to keep watch on both the road ahead and the danger that circled in the skies above, Risyā was relieved.

Comforted by the protection, Risyā gladly accepted and they set off. As the tall Camel walked under the strong overhead sun, Risyā scurried around below, between his legs, all the time carefully remaining in the shadows. Eagles circled above.

After a very long walk they reached the edge of the plains where once again grew tall trees and thick bushes covering the forest ground. Now stood before Risyā the beginning of another dense wood. He felt safe from the eagles at least. Where the woods began the Camel halted and said, 'I cannot go further than this. If I do I will fall, for I am an animal of the open plains. You are on your own now. Goodbye my brother. And thank you.'

Thanking him in return for the shelter and safety with which the Camel had brought him, Risyā confessed how he had been afraid of being stepped upon by one of the four long legs of the Camel. Risyā's concern was met by a friendly laugh from the Camel, 'that couldn't be, for they called me the 'Sun Descendent'', he said. 'I know where each of my feet step.'

Smilingly happily and sharing a farewell filled with warmth and gratitude, the two brothers parted, leaving little Risyā to scamper off into the next, to survey and carry on his mysterious voyage to the Holy Hill.

He scurried along engulfed by the beauty of this forest. Met by an array of freshness that captured his attention, he playfully explored

each. This brave little rat so far away from home merrily journeyed on when his sight fell upon a Lion.

Risya's one eye opened wide as he looked on at the beautiful and noble Lion seated in the cool shade of the forest. The Lion looked regal and grand. But something puzzled Risya. He noted the Lion was looking around extremely perplexed and confused. He seemed lost. So Risya leisurely approached him, smiled and said, 'Hello, I am Risya the rat. Are you lost?' His reply was met by an even more questioning look from the majestic animal. He had no answer. So Risya spoke some more and soon gathered this Lion couldn't remember who he was. So, Risya gladly reminded him, 'You are the magnificent Lion.' The Lion seemed to gain some memory by this for he explained to the intrigued Risya he often slipped into such states of oblivion and forgetfulness. As they spoke, Risya noticed the Lion drifting once again. In time, Risya witnessed his frequent drifting. It was clear how often the Lion lapsed into a state of no recollection of who he is. It saddened and distressed Risya to see the plight of this beautiful creature. Sitting beside him in his moments of distress, Risya spoke with tender consideration.

Risya wondered by himself how this novel creature could be helped out of his misery. A fresh thought penetrated his mind. 'By giving his one eye the Camel had been healed, maybe an eye could heal the lost Lion too.' Risya knew if he gave his other eye away, he would be completely blind and helpless. But the Lion would be cured.

Voicing his thoughts to the Lion, Risya uttered his willingness to give away his only other eye to the Lion. The eye leapt out from his body and in that very instant, inexplicably the Lion healed!

Risya now sat in the dense forest sightless and blind. But he knew from his heart the Lion had healed. Risya experienced a flowing happiness. The Lion sat beside him, shedding tears of joy. Grateful beyond words the Lion knew he had been given a new life. Risya had saved his life. He knew who he was. And he shared this with the little blind rat.

Thoughts flooded Risya's head. The Journey is meaningless and impossible now. Yes, how can a blind rat see the Holy Mountain? But I can find solace in the fact that so far at least two have been helped. 'Risya, what purpose brings you to this dense forest?' the Lion's voice interrupted his stream of thoughts.

Risya explained why he was there. He had been on his way to the Holy Mountain. To this, 'I will be ever so glad to escort you Risya, for I am none other than the Guardian of the Sacred Mountain', the lion revealed.

Elated by the unexpected turn of events, Risyā knew his Journey hadn't ended after all. The Guardian would take him further. The 'Guardian of the Sacred Mountain' told Risyā to walk close, near, and follow him through the forest paths. In this manner, the two proceeded on their way.

By and by, travelling through the weaving paths of the forest Risyā and the lion reached a Lake. Seated beside the Lake the Guardian shared precious knowledge. It was no ordinary Lake it was, the 'Sacred Lake'.

'The waters of the Sacred Lake are no ordinary waters', he said. 'They are holy and healing. All creatures of Creation as well as the Sky and the Earth are reflected in it. So any being who drinks from it will gain the Ancient Wisdom.' Saying thus, the Guardian of the Sacred Mountain led Risyā to the edge of the Holy waters and Risyā bent forward and drank from the Sacred Lake.

After a moment's pause the Lion spoke, 'I must take your leave now, dear friend. I have to return to my purpose of helping other animals towards the Holy Mountain.' It saddened Risyā they had to part. Risyā also feared for he couldn't see where to go from here. He had no sight. The Lion bid farewell and they parted with a loving sadness.

He sat by himself, beside the Lake. There was nowhere to go now. And there was nothing he could do. From above he could hear the flapping of the Eagles wings. He could hear their cries spreading through the skies. There was nowhere to run. He sat. He felt a rush of air in his head as though the eagle was passing through his whole being. He accepted his helplessness; he stayed vulnerable with no urge to run. Risyā was ready to die.

The sounds of flapping wings grew close. And then even closer! Risyā closed his eyes tight, ready for whatever was next. He felt a sharp gush of wind hitting his body. They were close. Too close! In an instant, he felt a hard brush against his body and Risyā fell to the earth in a daze, losing his senses. The last thought in his head was, 'Now I am going to die!'

The sound of the flapping wings continued. As they grew closer and closer Risyā felt himself growing transparent to the flying eagles. Yes, Risyā, felt as though the eagles were passing through him. Suddenly an overwhelming silence descended through him. Everything became perfectly still!

Some time passed. Risyā lay there on the bank of the Sacred Lake. Not dead. Something extraordinary was happening with him. He blinked in wonder. He could see! Faint and blurry, but he could see!

Risya leapt to his feet. Overcome by excitement he started to jump for joy. He skipped and leapt around, screaming with all his might, shouting for joy, 'I can see. I can see. Yes, I can see.'

But it was not to end here. Amidst his own uproar and ecstasy, Risya felt someone come very, very close. Someone came and whispered, 'Risya, do you want the food of the Elder's, the giver of Life to all creatures?'

Risya's spontaneously replied by moving his whole body like a wave, 'Yes, yes....'

The voice continued, 'Risya, 'crouch down low, as low as you can go. Then jump up high, as high as you can try!'

And so Risya did. Risya crouched down low, as low to the earth as he could go and then jumped up high, as high as all his strength could try. And once again, he was up in the air, high up in the air... Very slowly, bit-by-bit the blurriness left and Risya could see more and more clearly.

Up in the air, Risya felt a strong and rising wind come and carry him even higher in the air and then even higher. Risya was soaring high... higher than he had ever imagined. He felt the air grosser than him and he is adrift, piercing through the wind by wind. There was nothing he could but trust it, and its might and power to keep him safe.

This time he was not falling to the earth.

As Risya looked down, far down below he could see the forest, he could see the Lake and the vast stretches of land, but Risya could also see much, much more than that. He could see all and he could see through all.

Flying through open skies, crossing above the Lake and rounding a thick of trees, Risya suddenly saw a bright radiation, a brilliance that blinded him. Yes, the golden radiation of the Mountain....

His feathers were in gold. The very gold that stretched as the golden beams of mountain... He didn't stop but flew up above the Lake again. He saw the Sacred Lake reflecting his golden feathers in it.

And then He saw the Frog. She was seated as before on a green leaf by the waters. She shouted to him, 'Risya! You are no more a Jumping Rat. You are the Eagle! The Golden eagle!'

Risya's voice thundered in response to her, 'There is no way to overcome fear other than becoming that itself of which we are afraid, Oceanic Moon'!!!



Alchemy is the art of recognising what is in conflict. By alchemically purifying the inessentials and dissolving the conflict, these very same conflicting factors fall back to their original complimentary nature. In other words, by this process of purification they are reborn to manifest as their inherent levels of possibilities, harmony and potential. The art of alchemy holds up the banner stating this art to signify the potential of transformation inherent in nature to manifest the spirit hidden in matter - animate and inanimate. The result born of alchemy is known as Elixir.

This art has been classified in five, often overlapping forms.

External Alchemy	Internal Alchemy
Vaidhiya Muppu	Mantra Muppu
Vatha Muppu	Yoga Muppu
	Gnana Muppu

External alchemy works from the outside in. While internal alchemy works from inside to out.

Vaidhiya Muppu is the art of making potent and increasing the healing properties of herbs, metals and minerals by alchemical transformation.

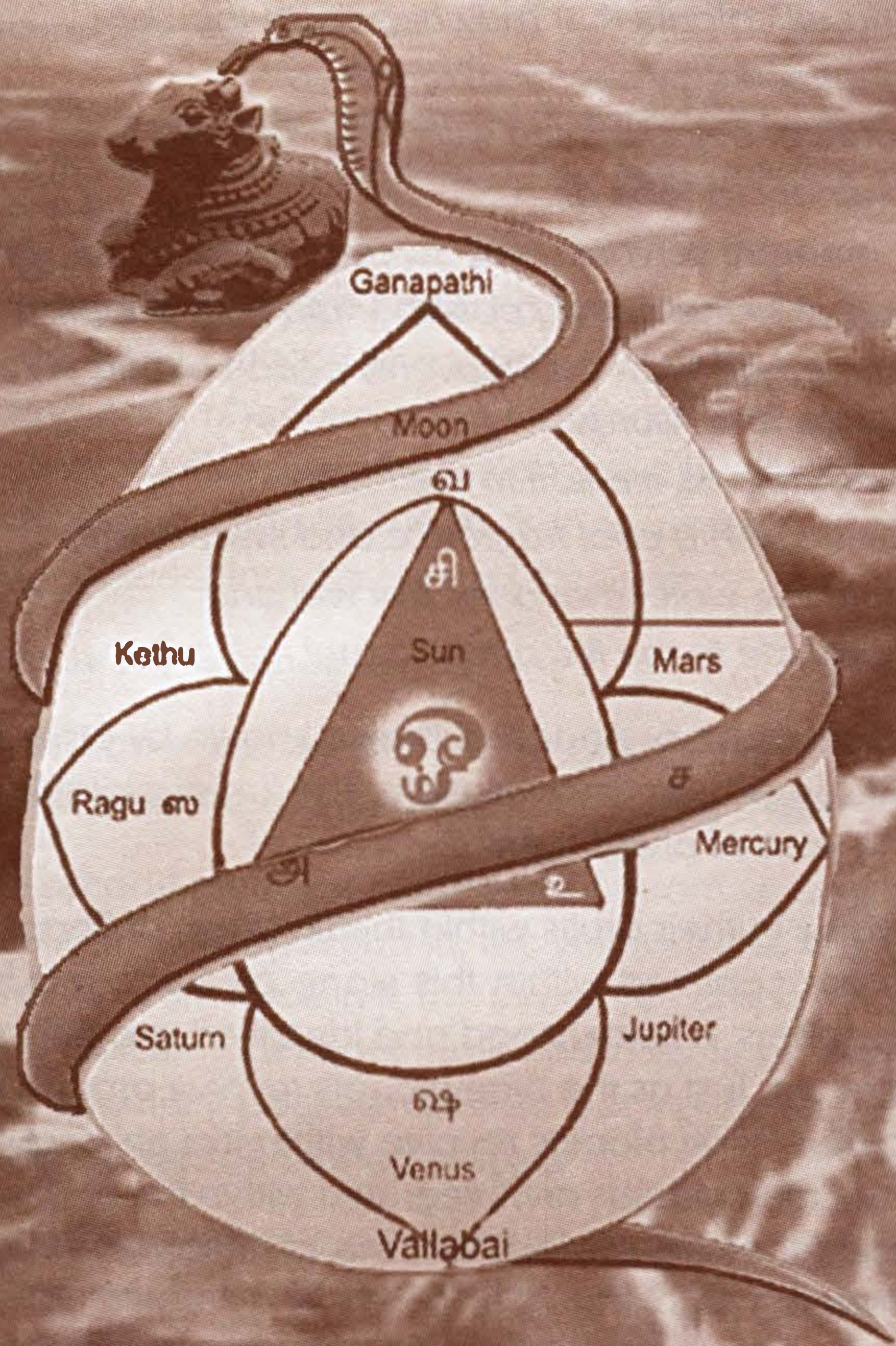
Vatha Muppu is the art of transforming base metals into gold. Existentially all metals are already slowly evolving to a perfect state of Gold. This natural transformation can be speeded up and made instant by the art of Vatha Muppu.

The Siddhas have classified the agents that play a role in alchemical phenomena of transformation and purification into four groups of alchemical agents:

Outermost,
Outer,
Inner
and Innermost.

The Outermost and Outer are the Macrocosmic alchemical agents and the Inner and Innermost are the Microcosmic alchemical agents.





Elixir of Life

EXTERNAL ALCHEMY

The elixir that prepares one to attain heavenly treasure (Vaan Porul) by attaining perfection in Yoga is called 'Andakkal' in the ancient Siddha works; the Philosopher's Stone. It is described to be spherical in shape, tightly binding together all the five elements. Both by Westerners as well as the Easterners it is illustrated as under:

*It is a small stone
Having all colours that may appear in the sky.
It is unaffected by chemical reactions;
Capable of being played with, even by children.
So ordinary to look at,
That, ignorant servants may sweep it aside as refuse;
But equal to the deadly poison (Hala Kala Visham),
That emerged from the heavenly ocean of milk when churned, by
the Devas and Asuras.
Properly treated, it is soft to the touch,
Endowed with a cool fragrance and sweet taste,
It is fluid like water that does not wet and
Comparable to the fire and the sun!*

The philosopher's stone or Andakkal is also known by other names such as 'The vase of Ambrosia', Amritha Kalasam; The 'un-depletable bowl', Akshaya paathiram; 'the vase of philosophers'...

As planets revolve in their orbits within the confines of Space, the powers of these planets are confined within this stone as if within a box. Unless this 'vase of philosophers' is understood and identified, the philosopher stone is impossible to attain. Just as the nine planets revolve around the sun as their centre, the powers of all planets revolve within the philosopher's stone. The powers of all the nine planets are integrated within the philosopher's stone. If this is understood then it is obvious why the 'philosopher's vase' is compared to the nine planets.

The Ancient Siddhas subtly point out the 'heavenly treasure' can be easily attained through the 'philosopher's stone' or 'Andakkal'.

They use the word 'Andam' to describe the philosopher's stone. Why? One meaning of the word is 'Universe', which implies the '*All of Existence*'. When Creation took place the primordial matter transformed and manifested in its diverse multi forms, as per the dominating five elemental influences. But over and above this nature of movement, one more manifestation has been declared by the Siddhas. The Primordial matter itself, in it's 'as-is' state, also descended to the Earth. It lies hidden, buried and dormant, unseen, embracing

all the five elements within it. Usually the fire element is known to be incompatible with the water element and a change in their ratios occurs in order to accommodate each other in that manifestation. But in this primordial matter all five elements are locked in a divinely compatible bondage.

Siddha Sage Agasthiyar has mentioned this in his cryptic and twilight verses saying,

Siva, immersed in Samadhi lays buried under the Earth.

My alchemical teacher has said,

The three treasures within the Philosopher's stone must be first separated to be purified, then they be reunited to be ingested'. This is the Trinity!

The second meaning of the word Andam is Egg. In all-inclusive perspective it is seen the Siddhas have placed and mentioned each word in a significant manner indicating each phenomena or function. If one cannot understand the true connotation of the used word it can leave him highly perplexed, but if one does perceive the implied truth, it then unfolds a co-relating and associative chain of teachings for him, by their grace.

I recall the words of my Teacher, saying,

'If you can understand the language of the Siddhas then to understand the human mind is not a big matter.'

Considering the second meaning of the word Andam, an Egg has three parts within it. The white part called Albumin, the yellow is the Yolk and the Prana is the living essence or life force in it. The three are compatibly packed within, yet separate. This indicates there are three treasures; in other words the three elements are compatibly packed within it but yet have the possibility of separation for the above-mentioned process.

If we can seek out this 'Andam' and ingest it after proper preparation, we will be freed from the influence of the planets, which lay between us and the 'heavenly treasure'. Then, even the planets will behave in our favour. Unaware of this great secret many people recite mantras like Navagraha Panchatchara, 'The five letters mantra for nine planets', by the millions without truly obtaining any benefit and only to lose the body by the power of Maya without attaining realization. This is to say the 'heavenly treasure' cannot be attained merely through Mantra or Tantra.

What is called 'Amritha Kalasam' (the Bowl of Nectar) or 'Pranava Peettam' (the altar of primal nine) is actually a container. Naturally, the content is different from the container and this has been expressed by Siddha Saint Ramalingam Swami as follows:

*The treasure box has an immovable substance in it,
 You blessed me by offering the precious key that opens it,
 But, I am the ignorant who doesn't know what is Eight and two.
 Now, I am attempting to open and release the substance from the
 box,
 Don't object to it, I can't wait even half of a moment,
 Then I will get thousands of abundance from You,
 As an interest for the delay,
 I promise on you, oh! God dancing in the Hall of gems,
 Please come quickly and bless me"*

Thiru Arutperu, Verse 2, By Siddha Saint Ramalingam

He Says,

*"I am trying to take out from the container these two grand and
 precious objects, by the name of 'A-kaaram' and U-kaaram".*

Having said this, he continues,

*"Don't think of objecting to it". Afraid of losing it after getting so
 close, he prays to the Absolute to shower its blessings.*

Before knowing the single herb of 'Andakkal' (universal stone or philosopher stone) that contains both the demonic poison as well as the Ambrosia that bestows eternal life, we must first very clearly realize the nature of the sacred container 'Amritha Kalasam' (Bowl of nectar) that contains it.

One of the sides of the container is quadrangular. Another surface is crescent-shaped. And a third surface is triangular. This is the appearance of the inner surfaces of the container. The external appearance is like that of a phallus (lingam) or a banana. Sage Agasthiyar describes its appearance to be on the whole unattractive and repulsive. The Sages who have great wisdom have extolled its true worth.

A-KAARAM: the symbolic representation of 'A'

Amongst all languages that have come into existence in the entire world most have both verbal and script forms, thus my alchemical teacher explained. All these languages uniformly have 'A' or 'A-kaaram' as their first letter in the alphabetical order. This uniformity could not have occurred accidentally. Those who created these languages and their linguistics would have realized the significance of 'A' or 'A-kaaram' before giving it the first place. Also, amongst the vowels that can be used alone, 'A' comes first.

In the ancient Tamil number system, 'A' denotes 'eight' (8); amongst the Genders, it denotes the Sun; amongst the functions it denotes the

profession of Lord Siva, i.e. destruction – samhara; amongst the five elements, it denotes the fire; amongst the arms, it denotes the right arm; and amongst the Nadi's – (channels of Yoga), it denotes the palate.

U-KAARAM – the symbolic representation of 'U'

The letter 'U' or 'U-kaaram' in the Tamil language is the substance mentioned as the second portion of 'Pranava' (AUM).

U-kaaram denotes 'two' amongst numerals; amongst genders, it denotes the 'female'; amongst functions, it denotes 'creation' (urpathi); amongst the five elements it denotes water; amongst the arms, it denotes the left arm; and among the Nadi's, it denotes the 'uvula'.

A-kaara (a) and U-kaara (u) are Siva and Sakthi; the 'Bindu' and Female. If one realizes these two components of the philosophers stone and properly nurtures them, all medicines become effective.

When foam created by ocean waves dries up in the sun, a sponge is formed. Similarly, by the union of 'a' and 'u' the philosopher stone, or Andam is formed. Andam means Egg or Universe. The Siddhas call it by many names such as Andam, Pindam, Brahmam and Parai Uppu meaning Rock Salt is a cryptic name it has.

It has been pointed out earlier that the A-kaaram denotes the Sun and U-kaaram denotes the ocean or the Moon. Keeping this fact in view someone has sung the line 'the Mount Meru blown about by the waves'. Therefore, although the 'A-kaaram' and 'U-kaaram' are mentioned as two, they indicate one thing in truth. Similarly, although 'the light of the eye' and 'the light of the sky' are two different things, either one would be useless without the other. Likewise, the two components 'A-kaaram' and 'U-kaaram' exist similarly.

A person having perfect eyesight still cannot see anything in a dark room. Therefore, to see, in addition to perfect eyesight, external light is also necessary. 'A-kaaram' and 'U-kaaram', the apparent two parts of the philosopher stone, should be understood in a similar manner.

What comes by distilling the mixture of 'A-kaaram', the fire and 'U-kaaram' the water is 'Ambrosia' from which the toxic element has been removed. This 'ambrosia' is known as 'M-kaaram', (the letter 'm'), the third aspect of "AUM". The Siddhas called this distillation process as the 'Alchemical Pooja of Goddess Vaalai'.

The 'M-kaaram' is the Kalpa or Elixir, capable of permeating it into 'Chunnam' (the calcined). The beneficial qualities of this liquid has been greatly extolled by Siddhas like Agasthiyar. This reveals how 'A-kaaram', 'U-kaaram' and 'M-kaaram' are intimately bound together. State of union of these three is, also what is called 'Monad' (Eka-Vasthu).

Attaining the alchemistical monad, called by the Siddhas as Vaatha Siddhi is usually through Rasa-Vatham, the process of transforming mercury into gold. When mercury is heated on porcelain and the temperature rises gradually, the Hg tends to evaporate while manifesting a slight boiling motion on the surface. At that moment, A-U-M i.e. the three elements, fire, water and air are added in it. According to certain rules laid down by the Alchemy Siddhas, even if one drop of these three elements, already bound into a single catalysis substance touches the heated Hg, it cools down and transmutes into high quality gold.

In whatsoever manner one may attain success in alchemy; it is caused only by the four elements air, fire, water and earth. Even if one of these four elements is absent, there can be no success in alchemy. Most people, once they have attained success in alchemy begin to indulge in the world of pleasures and give up all effort to attain ultimate happiness. They forget the success attained in alchemy is only the first step in the path of Ultimate happiness. Others try and attain success in alchemy as if it were an end. According to the Siddha cult, it is for the sake of those who practice 'Kaaya Siddhi', immortalizing the physical realm and 'Yoga Siddhi', that success in alchemy is offered as an incentive.

The term 'Trinity' (mupporul) denotes the three elements of air, fire and water.

The esoteric rock salt crystal is in what these three things are strongly bonded and is termed as 'Muppu' (universal medicine, elixir) in Siddha literature. These three things exist all over the earth both individually and in various bonded combination as well. Similarly, A-kaaram, U-kaaram and M-kaaram are contained within the container called 'Pranavam' or 'Andakkal'. Only earth and water are visible to the eyes in the world. The fire is invisible. But we know very well the earth remains as hot molten lava in its core and has not yet hardened. So, although fire is invisible we feel its existence. The three things exist within the philosopher stone in a similar manner. This rock salt mostly remains hidden inside hills or beneath the ocean. This esoteric rock salt seems to have the quality/potency of mercury and sulphur.

A-kaaram, the fire element is bonded with both Air and Water. U-kaaram the water element, bonded with the air gives rise to the watery salt.

In context of the union of A-kaaram and U-kaaram; the elements of fire, air and water are esoterically taken as mercury, sulphur and salt. The art of regenerating these three substances from the 'Anda Kalasam' (the vase of ambrosia) and adding them after due processing is known as 'Diksha', initiation.

To inject the substance so obtained in the proper manner for one year is considered as 'one Diksha' or one initiation.

Siddha Sage Thiruvalluvar says,

"If it is taken for one year, longevity will be attained".

Siddhas reveal one can attain Kaya Siddhi or physical immortality on the completion of ten such initiations called Dasa Diksha. This is what is known as ‘the Sadhana of Kaya Siddhi’. If it is undertaken twice daily, morning and evening, followed with diet restrictions like milk-rice etc as well as internal alchemy practices, one becomes immortal. This is called “Kaya Kalpa” by ancient alchemy Siddhas.

Even if western alchemists have attained success in external alchemy, they died without incorporating the internal alchemy techniques.

Hidden in the earth, this magic wand operates at “God’s intent” to stir up worldly animation. This treasure can bestow all miraculous powers and if mixed with medicines can create various new kinds of elixirs. This is used by Siddhas for sorcery.

This philosopher stone is seeded by nature on its own. It is the residue of the creative energy that created the world. Siddha’s name it Brahman, the Primal Creator. Since this substance is the causative factor for all other substances to be created, Siddha Thirumoolar terms it the “oldest substance”. Siddhas say even spiritually heightened souls cannot see this substance, if they don’t have the fate or the grace of ancient Siddhas.

Just as an egg contains albumen, yolk and prana within the shell, the stone has 3 equal segments. First segment signifies the pace of growth; the second is for breeding and the third part is its deterioration.

*“Opening the mysterious Box, three objects will emerge
Opening the mysterious Box, three glitters will emerge
Opening the mysterious Box, three divine fields will be revealed
Opening the mysterious Box, three barren grounds will be
disclosed”*

Nadhantha Saaram-100, Verse-13, Siddha Thiruvalluvar

Western alchemists say,

*“The copulation of the two is like the union of husband and wife,
whose embrace makes result into golden water.”*

Ascanius

Another says,

*“All things created by nature consist of three primal elements, namely,
mercury, sulphur and salt in combination. Three emerge from one
and the one contains three, three in one.”*

Paracelsus

Readers should understand a fact: Mercury, sulphur and salt referred here are not the actual substances but cryptic names for the three aspects of the philosopher stone.

The psychology of the human body according to Siddha science is based on the five great elements that constitute the external world and are internally at the root of man. They are found in all bodies by the process of transmutation and union.

In their natural existence they are found more or less mixed-up and are apt to change from one to another. They are the fundamental principles of creation, preservation and destruction in the Universe. They are so closely connected with one another that they lend and borrow their qualities amongst themselves. Each has two specific properties of which one is retained as original belonging to itself. Fire changes into air, air to water to earth and again earth to water, water to air and air to fire and this cycle of transformation is the foundation of all bodies and their wonderful functioning.

Of the five elements, three physical elements of the external world viz. air (wind), heat (fire) and water are selected in medical Science as they form the three fundamental principles on which the constitution of human beings is based. A detailed account of these elements, known as humoural pathology is dealt with in earlier chapters. Humoural pathology explains all diseases are caused by the mixture of the three cardinal humours, viz. Vatha, Pitta and Kapha and the relative proportion of these humours are responsible for a person's physical and mental qualities and his disposition. These are the three fundamental principles and essential factors in the composition and constitution of the human body. Wind, bile and phlegm respectively represent air, fire and water.

The external air corresponds to the internal Vatha (air dominant principle), external heat corresponds to the internal Pitta (heat dominant principle) and external water corresponds to the internal Kapha (water dominant principle). Man is thus linked with the external world and any change in the elementary condition of the external world results in a corresponding change in the human organism. It is upon the inter-change of influence the Tridosham theory or the doctrine of Humoural Pathology and Alchemical insights are based.

Each of the five elements is represented by a seed syllable in ancient Tamil letters:

‘NA’ represents the Earth principle (Tattwa). Its ratio is 1 1/2 (earth)

‘MA’ represents the Water principle - It's ratio is 1 1/4 (water)

‘SI’ represents the Fire principle, Teyu - It’s ratio is 1 (fire)
‘Va’ represents the Air principle, Vayu - It’s ratio is ¾ (air)
And ‘YA’ represents Ether principle - It’s ratio is 1/2. (ether)

The total of the ratio is 5. These five proportions create the physical body.

Ancient Siddhas converted this ratio of gross proportion into subtle proportions as:

‘SI’ represents the Fire Tattwa - It’s ratio is converted - as 1 1/2
‘VA’ represents the Air Tattwa - It’s ratio is converted - as 1 1/4
‘YA’, the ratio of this Ether Tattwa is converted as 1
‘NA’, the ratio of this Earth Tattwa is converted as 3/4
and ‘MA’ the ratio of this water Tattwa is converted as 3/4.

Alchemical Principles

The alchemical principles formulated by the Siddhas also reflect on their medicinal system. For instance, a single medicine can be used as remedy for various diseases only changing the carrier, adjuvant. Based on alchemical principles the Siddha medicinal system uses for its medicinal preparations Herbs, Minerals, Metals and Animal Products as some of its raw ingredients. The methods used by this system consist of simple herbal remedies, applications of metals, minerals and some toxic things in order to cure various disorders of living beings in a proper manner.



SHELF LIFE

The following is a tabulation showing the shelf life of certain Siddha preparations as assessed by the Siddhas.

NAME OF THE PREPARATION	SHELFLIFE
Chenduram (calcined red powder)	75 years
Churanam (fine powder/pulvis)	3 to 6 months
Chunnam	500 years
Lehyam (confections)	6 months
Irasayanam (semi liquid)	1 year
Kalpam (Elixir preparations)	many years
Karuppo (calcined black powder)	1 year
Kudineer (decoctions)	3 hours
Manappaagu (medicated syrup)	6 months
Mathirai (tablet/pills)	5 years

Melugu/ Kulambu (soft wax/semi-liquid ghee)	1 year
Nei (medicated ghee)	6 months
Parpam (calcined residue)	100 years
Patankam (sublimates)	10 years
Thailam (medicated oil)	1 year
Thiravagam (distillates of salts/minerals)	1 year
Thinir (distillates)	1 year
Vatakam (lozenges)	3 months
Vennai (medicated butter)	3 months
Velimarunthugal (external applications)	1 to 5 years



WESTERN ALCHEMY

In ancient Egypt, many concentrated on making gold from metals. Egyptians used the term 'Chemia' and the people who researched it were called the Alchemists. The Alchemical world spread and came to the ancient Greeks. The German word 'Chemie', and French word 'Chimie' and English word Chemistry are all derivatives of that very root word. Then, when the Arabs invaded Egypt, they too came to know of Alchemy. Jabir ibn Hayyan is known as the founder of Arab Alchemy. His period is recorded as 720-813 A.D. There are Arabic and Latin books written by him. His words relate the information process.

Al-Razi, who lived 826-925 AD was another well-known alchemist. He wrote the famous work, 'The Secret of Secrets'. A source for alchemy developed in Europe Paracelsus, who lived during the 16th century alchemist is the well-known alchemist in Europe. Basil Valentine is another one. But, the period of alchemy came to an end in the 17th century after the advent of Robert Boyle, who laid the foundation of modern chemistry. After that the transmutation of alchemical processes was considered superstitious. But a few practiced secretly.

On February 24, 1896, Henry Becquerel conducted a research into radioactive substances. In 1898, Madam Curie and her husband discovered Radioactivity. This phenomenon destroyed many of the theories, once again proving that the transmutation propounded by Alchemists can be possible as transmutation always occurs in some elements in a spontaneous manner. Based on this principle an artificial process of converting elements into other elements was pursued and proved.

The Philosopher's Stone is the residue of the primordial creative energy process. It has the seeds of Transmutation.

In the West, alchemy stands divided into two camps; one being the laboratory alchemists and the other the 'spiritual' alchemists. I will discuss the second group first.

The true art of Alchemy is far from an external pursuit of deriving combinations. Unfortunately, today a lot of the New Age thinking wears the causal attitude of 'anything goes', completely unaware of the deeper psychology involved in this ancient art. This is very true as far as spiritual alchemy is concerned. I think Carl Jung began the whole idea. But their basic premise was that the texts of alchemical instructions of earlier centuries were not designed for laboratory work at all, and that they were descriptions of inner processes and practices leading to enlightenment for which the study of these texts from this standpoint was all that was really needed. Some of these people (very few) are following Chinese techniques of yoga and meditation that are actually based on alchemical working - in fact there is a lot of similarity between these practices and certain forms of Tantric yoga; where a lot is concentrated on learning to utilize the energy of semen etc. Some follow traditions that supposedly come from ancient Greece (which would mean they originated in Egypt) or the Hebrew Kabala, which is the occult path of the Jewish religion.

Lab alchemy today finds the smartest of Western occultists. About half a dozen I can think of are very serious and I highly respect their work. Generally, they work with what they call as the Spagyric process, which is separating the Salt, Sulphur and Mercury of a given substance. In the case of a plant, the salt is what you get after several incinerations of the plant's ashes. The Sulphur is the essential oil, and the Mercury is the alcohol that can be drawn from the plant by fermentation etc. After these are properly separated, they are then recombined to make an exalted substance called a Spagyric Elixir. This is more or less the essence of the plant work in the western way. These Spagyrics are very powerful medicines, but rare, because there are very few who actually make them.

There is a more complicated method of working with plants. It creates a substance called the 'first being' of a given plant. This is an even more powerful medicine.

Another thing done is creating various substances of help in performing the separation and re-combination - this art is called creating a 'circulata'. There are specific techniques to make oils from gemstones and metals, but the metal work of this type is considered highly difficult. Most of this work is centred around making medicine either of curative nature or to accelerate spiritual development.

The ultimate goal is to make the Universal Medicine, which is told to come in two forms - the white form being the Elixir that cures all illness and the red form being the medicine that can turn base metals into gold. Many 'Greats' of the past, enjoyed considerable success with their medicines, but due to the

political and scientific (I hate to use that word when I am discussing work done by corporate laboratories) climates, little is known to the outside world.

Much of the western written material on alchemy is found in the symbolism of the Greek and Hebrew traditions, but this is mostly the general stuff. Majority of the best work is available in the French language where the practices have much deeper roots and in Eastern Europe (specifically Czechoslovakia).

Most Lab alchemists are usually spiritual aspirants and take great issue with people practicing mixed paths that borrow from Indian occultism etc. To me it seems the people into lab work are much smarter and have a greater understanding of nature, at the same time have a narrower view of spiritual development and spiritual forces at work in the world. It also seems there is something of an alchemical revival going on at this time. Some Universities are teaching courses; not teaching Alchemical and Spagyric preparations, but speaking of the history and symbolism of the ancient art.

Several alchemists of the past were responsible for important developments in Western science. People interested in spiritual development are getting tired of the same old stuff they've been getting over the years from money-hungry gurus and supposed spiritual masters who are better known for their wealth and sex lives than for their Siddhis. Also, word is getting around that Alchemy is the quick path where development can be accelerated by alchemical practices and medicines.



INTERNAL ALCHEMY

This sub section speaks on spiritual alchemy including the Elixir of Yoga and Elixir of Wisdom.

ELIXIR OF YOGA (Yoga Muppu)

Yoga Muppu is the art of alchemical transformation and purification to bring the natural, inherent and harmonious order to shine through the Yogic path. As we spoke earlier Alchemy demands to first know the nature of disharmony and prevalent chaos before bringing in harmony. Nature already sets to work the art of existential alchemy using the ground of inherent connectivity. By constantly reflecting what we term as disharmony, She is sharply indicating to what we fail to see - the harmony within it. This is the alchemy of nature.

Inherent Connectivity

Energy is universally ever present in both, the animate and the inanimate. Energy operates in a variety of patterns but the inherent pattern in the

manifestation is what determines its character. The universe is fundamentally nothing but an energy field. From all of the Universe's manifestations, Man is the only one that lives a paradoxical nature. Man is the only energy field that gets identified with a particular pattern and grips onto its limited reflective consciousness. Taken in by the paradox it seems as if Man has poured his essence into a container and complains of feeling cramped. Then in order to be comfortable in the container he decides to discard the extra, excess or discard what does not fit and is likely to make him more discomforted. He is in this illusion.

The power to be free of every conditioning pattern or constraining influence is what is called as, 'aspiration to fall into one self - the unconditional life.' The object world is not separate from the observer. All natural phenomena are understood in terms of human experience, while human experience is viewed as natural phenomena. Every natural happening is personified with a specific will of its own. But there is an inherent connectivity between human and nature.

I once read; the famous Saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa saw the horizon with dark clouds and cranes flying across the sky, he instantly fell into blissful Samadhi. In one sense dark clouds and white cranes appear contradictory indications but in Truth they are complimentary to each other - a coming together of two participants of a whole. This evoked the blissful Samadhi for him. Every natural phenomenon has a fundamental and universal meaning that reveals the values of human existence.

In the ancient mystic cult the Gods, Goddesses, demons and spirits are symbolised as archetypes of the 'unaware' potentials. These got personified and projected onto the natural world as trees, rivers animals and mountains etc. Vice versa Nature seems to provide a setting in which Man can experience these archetypes within his psyche, the archetype of his psyche. For some people a certain setting evokes and calls forth a corresponding authentic level experience in a powerful way. Nature's functions are no different from the functions of the exclusive 'God'. For some individuals the heartfelt experience with a forest or mountain answers a crisis need or their deepest longing at a crucial moment in their life.

Saint Ramakrishna's illusive boundaries were instantly nullified and devoured by the simple vision of two held within Nature's wholeness. Nature is always infused with feelings and values, even around us. There lies a sense of enchantment in each particle and every wave is filled with meaning. Any point in any moment can be a trigger for us to stand before our self, face to face. It is the zero point of now here; there is no resistance between, Nature and us. This is the alchemy of nature.



The Subtle Body Is Really Our Inner Body

*“The deer like identified consciousness is in body, physical,
The magnanimous supreme consciousness - not limited, but
As a body, subtle, mingles with the physical,
By entering as a seed into the womb, physical.
Even with both present, their working intelligence is different.
If you can integrate both, then clench
Your virgin primal life force.
You can quit your body and enter another,
You become an angel.
Can travel thousand distances in a moment,
Thus life span lengthened and crystal.
You, free from the verdict of Lord Brahma, the Creator,
With no interference with your life force,
It will subside in itself, thus.*

Bogar Janana Sagaram-557, Verse 505-507, Siddha Bogar

Losing Life

To understand the form of Yogic alchemy let us first see how chaos has taken root in us and how we continue to lose our life to it, before we attempt to know of its harmonisation.

One may have noticed when you press down with your hand on the surface of a body of water in a container with a certain pressure you feel a counter pressure in response to the pressure from your hand. This counter pressure is from the body of water. Likewise a human body always experiences pressure from both Man made objects as well as from Nature. Let us see how.

As humans we are exposed and vulnerable to our surroundings. The air in the atmosphere, the light from the Sun, the Prana arising from the rotation of the earth or natural forces, are all pressure factors influencing and triggering the response of counter pressure from us humans. As a response to such intangible forces our intangible subtle body projects itself. This is our response of counter pressure to Nature.

The Kirlian photography holds evidence of this phenomenon by capturing on film the projected form of the subtle body protruding outwards from within. Man made objects like artificial lights, instrumental sounds and the predominant head-way thinking demanded by society etc. also strongly influence the protruding subtle form and make it distorted and fragmented.

In the earlier pages, the Universe has been described to be an energy field. All creation and manifestations happens in this field. As a microcosmic entity

Man has a sense of stretched-ness towards spatial orientation and an agitated multi-sense of direction in this field of energy. If we say the energy field has only magnitude and no protruding direction, Man has both, as a vector. In other words the misalignment with the overall field creates a pressure.

For instance, the electromagnetic field created by the earth's rotation is interfering with the human magnetic force generated by the circulation of inner prana. So, getting orientation and equilibrium to adapt to the convergent energies and not lose one's true identity has been a challenge, especially when we want to keep our boundaries in place.

It is like; even though we are standing on opposite sides of a room, the ground of that room is folding in the middle and we are intercepting and collapsing into one another. We are vulnerable as we are inclusive of many others that are really unnecessary and insignificant to our life. This vulnerable interaction diffuses the vital spirit in us in a reckless manner.

Siddha Sattaimuni sings,

*"The mosquito loses its life at the attraction of touch mode,
The bees loses its life by the attraction of visual mode,
The deer loses its life by the attraction of auditory mode,
The fish loses its life by the taste mode,
The ant loses its life by the attraction of olfactory mode,
Observe simply how all these five creatures recklessly
lose their lives,
Just like, O Man you lose, your dear life entrapped in
conceptual sense frames."*

Sattaimuni Munghanam - 100, Verse 14

Thus, Man loses life by the attraction to all the five modes Siddha Sattaimuni sings of. And the overall governing factor of these five is majorly the mode of touch.

We may think we are in the body but we are actually, already and always stretched out and messed up in the foreground. While fragmented and caught up in the web of the five dissipative sense modes when for an instance we lose our grip over the foreground, we become receptive and return to our body. So, only when we drop the foreground to be our living reference do we fall back into the body and come together as our true earthiness.

Utter Receptivity

As emphasised by the Siddhas, Yogic Alchemy first paves the path to allow the ingathering of the dissipative modes, in utter receptivity. This leads to the

awakening of the fire of life and eventually ones rebirth or coming together of the subtle body. The whole and sole purpose of this alchemy in the Yogic way is to be engulfed by the Source.

The first practice in Yogic alchemy of the Siddhas is the separation of the pulsating Prana from the Air breath only by an utter receptivity flooding ones whole being.

The Hatha Yogis use Pranayama and Taoists practitioners use their own breathing techniques for the separation of Prana. All these body-based techniques may initially help but can lead to other complications in later stages. The reason being simple; there is an exclusive use of nothing but body movements for both the separation of prana as well as its holding, after separation. The use of solely bodily techniques brings an excessive condensation of Prana that tends to inflate delicate organs resulting in damages such as haemorrhage. Over and above tensing of the facial muscles in an attempt to concentrate or pull the Prana alters the authentic mode; so instead of receiving the Prana and allowing the descent, it localises the Prana and holds it stagnant.

This is why the Siddhas distinctively emphasise the role of a receptive attitude to be kept vital and the role of bodily techniques to be kept secondary. When one is in a completely relaxed and receptive state the separation of the pulsating Prana from the breath starts to gravitate. And all the five senses have their own ingathering impetus when they drop their egress nature. This inherent ingathering impetus can take over only under the umbrella of a receptive mode, which is why They emphasise on the receptive attitude as vital.

“Yogis’ never deviate their attention in this void external world.”

Inviting a receptive mode can really trigger the spontaneous inherent impetus. The receptive spirit unfolds the inner way through which we can proceed. Falling in this new opening, the unfolding vital spirit awakens and nurtures us.

By the Body of Earth

Spiritual life or Sadhana doesn't begin only when we embark on a spiritual path or practice. Spiritual evolution is always happening. Whether we are aware of it or not our body is already designed to function in this manner. The Siddhas and their teachings shed enough light on this to remove any dispute of this reality.

Divine Elixir has been commonly explained as the distillation of the five elements; water, fire, air, ether and earth. The Siddhas declare these five elements are associated with the five sense organs of the human body; eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. How can one bring together these five in order

to distil from it the divine elixir from within the human body?

The ancients have divulged the law of the five ‘non-out’ followings: when the eyes do not see, ears do not hear, the tongue does not taste, the nose does not smell and the skin does not sense any touch. This is nothing but an unfragmented livingness - whether it is by way of a path, quest or an ordinary life; a life where our senses are not used as vents to disperse and scatter our attention in multitudes.

Ideally speaking when any individual refrains from the improper use of his senses, by way of a natural phenomenon the un-dispersed energy collects and gathers, most importantly remains within the body. The human body collects and nurtures this energy in the Manipoorakam chakra. After which it descends to the storehouse of energy, the Mooladharam, where this primal energy is constantly getting distilled into elixir. This phenomenon is always at work but the formation and maturity of the elixir depends upon the effectiveness with which the energy is nurtured.

Whatever may be our day-to-day activity, if the law of non-out is predominantly overseeing our existence the rest takes its natural course. The law of non-out is based on how attuned the body-mind are. A Siddha is ageless, free of disease and enjoys lustrous health.

This vital breath (un-dispersed energy) must always go on collecting in the space found 2 inches below the navel, the source of strength and not allowed to disperse. This is because from here the entire being is nurtured and nourished. When the vital breath is fully accumulated below it leaves no room or opening for misfortune to operate, nor for evil to invade from the outside. The circulatory organs work efficiently and the heart and mind brim with health.

It is said by the Siddhas, it is essential to keep the upper parts of the body cool and the lower parts warm. This too is another way of indicating or implying the upper parts of the body should be kept free of agitated dispersing energy, which is hot in nature and instead this energy must be directed within and down. Thereby the upper parts are cooled and the lower parts warmed by the ever-accumulating primal energy.

Prime Movers

The Siddhas declare five types of vital impetus within our body-functioning as Prime movers. They call them the Vital Forces.

The invigorating vital force	- Prana
The outpouring vital force	Apana
The nourishing and assimilating vital force	- Samana
The all-pervading vital force	- Vyana
The uplifting vital force	- Udana

Initiation is imperative and a must in the Yogic Alchemy of the Siddhas. But in order for us to get a picture of the initial stage of practice and to enable us to know the factors involved I have given a brief description below.

Inhaling slowly and steadily through the nose one feels a subtle force separating from the air breathed in. After breathing in until the lungs are full the gross air travels on through the throat into the lungs. No attention to be paid to that. Instead a slight focus is kept on the descending spirit in the pulsating Prana. A sense of separation is needed to 'Pare' it from the air. The vital force likes to stick to the oxygen molecule O₂. This is the outer alchemical agent.

For this some practitioners may need a prayer or an incantation to invoke the separation during initiation praxis, but in the Siddha path the Master's breath, with His spirit of life is blown on the practitioner's face. This initiates the process.

In the early stages the essence thus separated is very subtle. Too much concentration or a grasping attention will cause it to dodge away like an impish sprite. This descending pulsation conjoins with the inner alchemical agent that is Enchymoma saliva.

*"The great sanctum dwells in the heart,
The fleshy body is the holy temple,
God, the provider of all virtues, the mouth
Turned to be the tower gate.
For the realised, the life force itself is the idol of Siva.
While the untamed five senses turn into fusion
They glitter as the guiding light.*

Thirumanthiram-3000, Verse 1823, Siddha Thirumoolar

Siddha Saint Ramalingam mentions five nectar spots within us.

*"The first nectar is under the tongue which has the taste of sweet spring water.
The second one is in the uvula spot. And the taste is like melted sweet Jaggary syrup.
The third one is on the bridge of the nose and tastes like boiled Jaggary syrup.
The fourth one is at the centre of the forehead and tastes like ripened thickened Jaggary syrup.
The fifth one taste's like sugar candy and exudes a deep coolness.
The person who dined the fifth nectar attains the immortal body."*

The Enchymoma saliva denotes the first form of nectar and signifies the inner alchemical agent. Both the inner and outer alchemical agents conjoin as a throbbing pulsation and descend. Once a person is floating in the descending pulsation through the frontal channel, a harmonic co-ordination of the subtle and physical body evolves and balance is attained. After being well grounded in this practice if a practitioner temporarily ceases the practice of collecting and descending the pulsating Prana mixed with the sap of saliva, he will feel hungry for it as we do when we don't eat for a while.

The next stage in this practice entails tackling another dissipative factor within our body - the sexual energy. This is another factor governing the mode of touch and conditions the body to be dissipative in nature. The outpouring vital force Apana is responsible for this. Hence the next stage in this practice is separating the virility from the sexual fluid. This virility is sublimated from the water element of sexual fluid.

Western countries show a higher indulgence in sexual activities, so when such individuals come to this stage of sublimation, a lot of heat is generated. This can burn the Ojas in the cellular levels. Contrarily in the east due to prolonged sexual suppression the energy turns cold and frigid. So for them the sublimation stage demands high spirit. However, in either case, at this stage of sublimation the elimination of deranged heat or the channelisation of suppressed energy should be considered first. Therefore, the Siddhas Kalpa system of both Internal and external alchemy insists on preliminary purification to be first adopted as a must.

Now, both the descending pulsating Prana mixed with saliva and the arising Apana, mix in the solar plexus area. Both these pulsating movements neutralise each other and assimilate under the governance of the nourishing and assimilating vital force of Samana. This assimilation endows a spiralling motion and descends to the basal chakra and ignites the fire of life, the Kundalini Sakthi.

The pulsation in the frontal channel is characteristic of the air principle. This is signified in the Siddhas terminology as 'Va'. The fire ignited by it is signified by the letter 'Si' according to the five letters of Lord Siva, 'Na Ma Si Va Ya'. Sublimating the procreative nature of virility from the moon path gets transformed into a creative energy for a new life in the Sun path, the posterior channel.

One now gives birth to ones inner body, one creates oneself. This newborn subtle body is not actually newly born but is the earlier protruded and extended one - now come together, de-fragmented and whole, as a seed. This subtle body sprouts like a baby, needing nourishment from the mixture of sublimated virility and the invigorating descending Prana conjoined with the rejuvenative Saliva.

A practitioner must adopt a serene awareness to enter into this subtle body. It is made possible by adopting a vacant look - a look that is not fixed on anything other than it. By this serene awareness one enters into the subtle body. By focusing on the subtle body it expands to reach your physical size. On being well grounded in this one can feel the subtle body outside of one's physical body from above one's head. It is an exact replica of the physical body, now positioned above the head. The Siddhas are adepts in transmigration and multi location by deploying the subtle body.

It is important to clarify here that this is not the same as an out of body experience commonly referred to by people today, or 'oobe'. Oobe happens through the naval area. It is not even the same as past life regression. This happens in the Mooladharam, the basal chakra.

This subtle body radiates and moves swiftly, but the true purpose of Siddhas alchemy is merging it into the source. This mergence is actually an engulfing.

It is not even like a dematerialisation process. Dematerialisation occurs when the entire cellular level memories completely vanish. As per the Siddha's wisdom this is also considered to be a type of mishap; just as auto-combustion.

*“What can stabilise the body?
It is the gracious primal Kalpam! Kalpam!
If you consume that primal kalpam,
It is the fruit from the fire of meditation.
Now where has death gone?
It has merged into the absolute intelligence.
Where has gone the I, the ego?
It turned to ashes in the fire of Nandhi, the Bull of Siva.”*

Siva Yogam - 200, Verse 57, Siddha Ramadevar

*“When it is burnt in the fire of Siva's Bull,
Those poisons that make one grey and wrinkled also crumble,
In the inner cosmos where breath subsides,
In the now emerging flame at the verge, Suzhi Munai,
If you boil your body in this flame,
The habitual impurities of body burn.
If those impurities are burned,
You are carried to the Hall of Gnosis.”*

Siva Yogam - 200, Verse 58, Siddha Ramadevar

In their typical manner, the Siddhas mention two cryptic words in Yogic alchemical songs. One is 'Kama pal', which means the Milk of passion and the second is 'Kanar pal', which is the Milk of Mirage. Just as the glandular

secretions play a vital role in the functioning of the physical body, these two esoteric 'Milks' play a vital role in the functioning of the subtle body. The fusion of the separated Prana, the nectar like saliva and the virile energy transforms the dissipative nature of the physical body. So, by the milking of sublimated passion, which earlier was in a dissipative mode, now enhances the fire in the basal chakra. When this fire begins to spread upwards in the posterior channel the remaining three types of nectar mentioned in the words of Siddha Ramalingam, start to drip, ooze and flow. These different types of nectars are called the milks of passion. The fire that spreads through the posterior channel is called as the milk of mirage. When we see a mirage it appears to be water, but in actuality it is heat waves floating above the ground. In inner esoteric pranayama, the Siddhas mention the release of this fire from the basal chakra and the spreading of it to be called as 'Rechaka'. The absorption of this fire in the Suzhi Munai at the third eye spot is called 'Puraka'. Here the fire transforms into light, which steams the fifth kind of nectar into flowing and permeating into the whole being. This is the nectar mentioned by Siddha Ramalingam as the bestowal of immortality.

*"God abided supreme from my centre of eyebrow,
in his luminosity like that of camphor flame,
I see no smoke, no flickering, but steady vision,
He unleashed the closed doorway of my mid eye.
And liberated me from darkness to light everlasting.
It was all His play, sanctified in the sacred expanse."*

Mahadeva Malai, by Siddha Ramalingam

The combined intermingling and the repetitive internal copulation of this descending pulsation along with the ignited fire is called 'Vaasi'. The ignited fire now ascends to an ecstatic experience and starts to spread through the posterior channel and merge in the Suzhi Munai. The spreading of this fire is called *Rivering the Fire* and happens spontaneously. But how it happens is a reflection of how highly potentiated the fusion of the three vital forces has been in the frontal channel.

The ascent of fire is not attained so easily. Siddha Saint Ramalingam has significantly mentioned in his prose work 'Pointers of Upadesha', as

"Like we remove the moss from the surface of the water, we have to remove the blackish green veil that curtains our soul. This veil can be removed only by the extreme heat of devotion and meditation and not by any other kind. This heat is well understood though Yogic practises and cannot be created by ordinary human effort. In order to gain this heat Yogis enter into mountains, forest, caves etc to practice various disciplines of Yoga for hundreds and thousands of years. Instead if we heart-fully think of God and pray sincerely even for a single hour, we can have this heat, increased many a million fold."

The human body has its own inertia. This inertia has been cryptically described as a blackish green veil; a veil that can be burned only by the heat as mentioned by the Siddhas.

But first, how did this inertia come to be?

What we describe as inertia is a mechanical habit stored as memory at our cellular levels. It is what really binds us, makes the body rigid and does not allow any suppleness and light. When the heat mentioned by the Siddhas, rivers and merges in the Suzhi Munai, a gracious light experience happens. This effulgent radiance melts the heart full cooling energy, the nectar, and distils it to descend and engulf the entire body, making it immortal - Engulfing the whole body as one heart.

*“When the divine consort connived in sport to shut the eye of Siva,
Dense darkness shrouded the Universe,
With grace abundance, He opened His flawless mid eye
And illumined in benevolence.”*

Siva Gnana Siddhiyar, 1.2.24



Metamorphosis

*“When the shadow of me will vanish?
When my embodied body be without its dissipative composition?
When a sword will pass unhindered through my body?
When my body will be afloat above the earth?
When my core self will engulf my body?
In that moment, as a self generated pill, My whole being*

Mathi venba - 100, Verse 8, by Siddha Yugimuni

The Siddhas speak of five consequential transformations resulting in the physical form on attaining deathlessness. Let us see each one briefly.

○ Shadow less body

Shadow is the reflection produced by a body under the influence of light. This reflection lengthens, shortens or gets distorted as per the influence of light. It is like our double and never leaves us single. Yet it is a separate entity that has thrown us aside. There is a strange practice under the Swara Yoga school of thought that guides us to unfold the hidden mysteries held in the shadows by visualising it for predictions and implementing the five elements. In this practice even, one's life span can be calculated based on his shadow. The practice is called 'Saya Darshan', Mysterious Sight of the shadow.

Once my Tantric master said, *“A person practicing this will have a short life span because he gives his life to his shadow.”*

But in the Siddha path, it is considered in a different way. With inner alchemical changes even the biological components flowing inside to out, such as sweat, urine, faeces etc. get transformed. There is no more ejection or dissipation of the subtle body as it is completely absorbed, assimilated and interiorised. Therefore, when light falls upon this form, this form doesn't serve as a stimulus for any reflection; light simply passes through unhindered. *There is no shadow for Him.*

○ Floating physique

What is a floating physique? The nectar that flows and engulfs the whole being is once again steamed by the heat from the radiating light and crystallises as a throbbing pill. This, the Siddhas call 'Vaasi Guliga', the primordial life pill. Siddha Agasthiyar explains the creation of this pill in higher Yogic alchemical processes, in his work, Agasthiyar Vatha Kaviyam. When this pill is whisked up to the crown area and glitters in this space, all the cells within the body get oriented upwards towards the glittering pill. The Yogi is thus relieved from the gravitational vortex and 'floats' as an anti gravitational force.

○ Un hindered Form

When all habitual patterns or cellular memories dissolve and are replaced by the enlivening light spirit, several other bodily changes come to be. The seven layered bodily skin starts to peel or loosen.

*“Uttering for success in Pranayama
Consume first the Elixir of Lord Siva.
If you practice Pranayama ignoring the Elixir Kalpa,
Be it even till the world ceases to be,
Oh! Your life will escape from you,
You will fail.”*

Antha Ranga Diksha Vidhi-412, Verse 351, by Siddha Agasthiyar

The Siddhas have significantly mentioned one to start an alchemical process by first consuming external alchemical preparations. Only then must he move onto orienting himself towards inner alchemical processes.

By this, all the unfulfilled latent Karma starts to upsurge in the form of diseases and there is a loosening of all the dead cells of the body, such as nails, hair etc. This is the heavy price paid for this metamorphosis. Naturally, one would lose any kind of craving towards bodily identification. It is a paradox. This takes a few good years to accomplish. The Siddhas mention in depth the various yearly changes that take place, in their alchemical songs.

But Siddha Saint Ramalingam speaks differently:

‘When a person longs solely for divine grace and relinquishes himself to it and surrenders even his very life force to it this immortality is gifted, without any pain-filled processes.’

This is to be engulfed by Grace.

*“You will not fall in death,
No shadow of you,
Nor shadow against lamps light,
Nor shadow mirrored on still waters,
If these quantum qualities emerge in ones form,
The body’s externalised coverings peel off one by one -
You radiate like the golden sun himself.”*

Siva Yoga Gnana - 32, Verse 31, by Siddha Sundaranandar

What kind of key factors are involved in this ultimate metamorphosis?



Siddhas Koans

Like the Zen Koans the Siddhas questioned paradoxically... for a body burning in the cremation ground the bodily fluids melt, the head burns and all other organs decompose to ashes. To this they ask, if there is an un-vaporising head and an un-flowable fluid within... then is there death?

There are inborn deathless elements already in us.

The five basic elements alchemically turn into the corresponding primal five deathless elements.

The corresponding five elements are mentioned by the Siddhas as:

Idiyatha Puvi	Unhindered earth
Poga Punal	Non-flowing fluid
Oliyadha Kanal -	Silent Fire
Saga Kaal	Undying Air
Vega Thalai	Un-vapourising Sky

*“Shown me, Oh my Lord,
The head that never dies and
The leg that never burns to ashes,
For it is You who has shown me,
The water that never keeps flowing and*

*Thus seated, Oh You, in my heart,
Like a brilliant effulgence of wisdom,
To the unknowing person, it is unknowable;
To me, it is ever blissful."*

Satguru Mani Malai, Verse 1382, by Siddha Ramalingam



GNANA MUPPU - ELIXIR OF WISDOM

*"Trailing memory, the robust monkey,
Jumping upon the branches of senses,
And agitating them in ghostly madness,
Fragmenting the mind to its very destruction -
Not allowing the mind into the doorway of its liberating origin.
It stands as darkness to glittering wisdom,
Even a person blind and ignorant does consume
The impetus of tracing memory,
The path of wisdom then shall open and take him."*

Mun Gnanam-100, Verse-51, Siddha Sattaimuni

Although the Sun in the cosmos is further above from the earth, its rays spread uniformly over earth that is so much further below. That sunshine illumines, nourishes, extracts and vitalizes all living beings with its fluid rays. Like the external Sun in the macrocosm, there is a sun within us - that is consciousness. Its rays spread all over the body, permeating and illumining one's personal world.

Every morning on waking up the egress fluid of consciousness externalises and reflects as objective consciousness and we begin to relate with the world. The Siddhas called this 'Ninaippu' or remembrance. Every night when we fall deep into sleep we are oblivious of the world, this they term 'Maraipu', forgetfulness or veiling. It is an inert state.

Man gets into this psycho spatial and psycho temporal mode after the egress spurt or egress shift into objectifying consciousness. This is his reflective mode of experiencing the world after waking up. As man steps out of the inert state of deep sleep, he begins to reflect upon and think about his experience with the perceived world. When this happens he becomes the subjective entity thinking about an object or experience.

In the waking state, he thinks of and experiences his own consciousness as if thrown before him. This very same reflected consciousness he sees as thrown before him falls into oblivion or gets thrown back, which is sleep.

*“That we term death is just like sleep
That we term birth is just like awakening”.*

-Thiru kural – 339 by Thiruvalluvar

The Siddhas say even birth and death are nothing but this inherent impetus of egress spurt, remembrance, and falling back into inertness respectively. This primal knot overrules our everyday experience of waking up to identify to one's personal world and falling asleep and being inert; this mutual oscillation are two sides of the same coin; a fluctuation of active and passive states.

Interestingly, this fluctuation happens not only between the sleep state and awaking from it but also in every moment. There is a difference between 'thinking' and 'thoughts'. Thinking is an active process to overrule something by a subjective influence. Thoughts are streams of memories overruling a person, a passive state.

We can become aware of this. On waking from our sleep, we actively start to think what we must do today as the mind likes to program because of the refreshment gained through sleep.

As for sleep; if we try to sleep we cannot sleep. The very effort to sleep is a hindrance to fall asleep. It is a passive state. So when we are in bed trying to sleep a streamline of thoughts invade us. They may be about anything. They overrule and overtake us. Then we lose our conscious control in the masquerading thoughts and fall into a dream, which is nothing but thoughts in visualized form. Everybody can understand that in all the dreams we have had in our life we cannot see our selves or our bodies in the dream but only sense our self as a subjective person participating in the incidents happening in the dream.

Where the dream ends there, deep sleep begins; where there is nothing subjective and objective; nor dreaming or waking. As we don't have awareness in this deep sleep state, it is an inert state.

*“Dine the A-kaaram that emerge at morning
Dine the V-Kaaram that occurs Evening”*

Invariably, all the Siddha's utter the above message in their alchemical songs. These cryptic words take on different meanings depending on subjects of external alchemy, yogic alchemy or spiritual wisdom alchemy.

When they sing this in their song 'Gnana Muppu', the process of wisdom-elixir they mention the secrets of both phenomena; the reflective egress spurt and the falling of objectifying consciousness into an inert state.

They say,

“Let yourself feel all of your self. Be aware of this stream of reflective consciousness that objectifies everything. Each morning as you become fully conscious of this shifting reflective state it will step back as a flow, a fluid consciousness. This is termed as ‘A’-Kaaram.”

The Siddhas have mentioned this by several other cryptic words like water, divine water, water of Siva, Amuri etc.

*“If you ask me to tell what is night and day
Oh son, I will disclose, listen now!
The night is nothing but the shutting of eyes
The day is nothing but sight!
Combining both these two fragmentary,
Whisk it into the supreme ground, which is as Inner Guru.
And if you stand firm there, in meditative Yoga
To move ahead to its origin, the native beyond,
That is known as ‘true Siva Yoga’.”*

Siva Yogam - 200, Verse 160, Siddha Ramadevar

The primal sound ‘AUM’ has three apparent syllables. A, U and M. There is another part in it, which is called the Artha Mathra, the Silent Spirit. This is the source or origin. The ‘M’-kaaram is the primal ground; the ‘A-Kaaram’ is the egress spurt, a reflective state, and the ‘U-Kaaram’ is the state of oblivion.

Every evening when the sun withdraws its rays and sets down, our urge of objectifying even begins to recede. This receding matures further at night as we fall asleep.

So, Siddhas sing in their twilight language,

“Ignite your fire every evening.”

It means light the fire of your awareness on these receding forces so that forgetfulness does not befall upon you.

The light of day fades away slowly. But before it does, lies a meeting point - where light and darkness meet, the twilight. It has both, the light and the darkness of consciousness.

As another instance; if we are able to find the moment when waking and sleep meet each other, then with a little more attention put on this moment it can be prolonged. For, at the time of sleep, the tendency of the mind naturally bends towards a cessation of restless activity and this very tendency can be cultivated to emerge slowly, feeling its way. It is better one does not extinguish the lamp all at once but sinks into sleep just as daylight vanishes into the bosom of the evening; just as a child falls asleep but the mother stays awake. The child has

a sort of trust that his mother is awake although he is not aware of it.

‘Ari Thuyil’ mentioned in Yogic system of Siddhas pronounces awareness as, *‘Sleep in the spiritual heart of the Mother.’*

In the depth of the night, the earth lies asleep meanwhile the sky remains awake and looks on through an unblinking gaze of myriads of stars. That sky is truly the heart of the Mother. To be asleep thus means to be awake to the vast awareness and peace of the sky, the grand infinite. Sleep does not mean extinction, but a silent wakefulness. We only need to invoke, by sensitivity, this wakeful silence and allow it to resonate in and expand our consciousness to it, spreading into the core heart of the Mother. In this way even sleep can reveal it's infinite ocean of Light.

This inherent fluctuation gets its navigation due to Vasanas, latent tendencies. It is an inbuilt instinctive mechanism. Burning these tendencies would be an endless task and would be like “beating around the bush”

*“More and more you pull water from the well
More and more springs out
The more and more you shun the tendencies of past imprints
The more and more they emerge”.*

-Mun Gnanam – 100, Verse-55, Siddha Sattaimuni

Burning each tendency leaves a distilled silence. This silence in terms of spiritual alchemy is called the ‘mother tincture’, but this is an incessant process. So, instead of burning each rising tendency and ‘distilling’ the mother tincture of serene silence on the fuming vapours of burned tendencies, just focusing on the ‘primal urge’ or the origin from where it gets its momentum is a more direct approach.

The fusion of water and fire creates a new life force, an infant. This is termed as ‘Ma’-kaaram, a throbbing streamline of the primal identifying urge or the prior identity. This is the pseudo self that gives a sense to our pseudo being by relying upon its identified roles, objects. A derived sense of being!

This ‘Ma’-Kaaram, the stream line of primal urge, to reflect itself into subject and object now gets newly oriented to stand alone, as a reverberation, a throb. Not to reflect but to fall back to its origin, the pre-reflective state. That state is significant of the fourth or the silent part of AUM. A great Repose!

Even the effort to mentally grasp wisdom or making a practice out of read knowledge leads only to intellectual stimulation. It also lands us as one amongst the intellectuals.

A mere look or gracious glance of a True Master under the waves of His Silence can make it real.

*“As lightening arises, spreads, recedes,
So the Lord of my heart arises and spreads
Who lay hidden within.
Like the eye that does not know its own seeing,
The lord who lay within I knew not
As if He were not there”.*

Siva Vakiyar Padalgal Verse-126, Siddha Siva Vakiyar

Here unfolds an understanding:

‘Even though everything else stands to depend on him to prove their existence, he depends on ‘nothing’ while abiding in eternal existence. This is disembodied awareness.’

‘Be like a child’. -Christ

In a circle the zero degree point and the 360 degree point apparently appear the same but there is a qualitative difference between them. An embodied full-circled journey is the 360 degrees.

A newborn baby being born in a state of undifferentiated spatiality enters into the world completely ‘pre-personal’, living in a ground prior to the reflective state of subject and object. But the baby is unaware of this.

Later, when a person comes to abide once again in this pre-reflective state he realizes his inherent sentient nature has always been everywhere as sentient, without fragment, non-reflective and as un-differentiated spatiality. There is no trace, nor urge left to step out of the flow of pre-reflective living experience to project or think about what He/She is experiencing.



THE ESOTERIC AND YOGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF IDOLS

“There is nothing in man which is not marked on his exterior, so that by the exterior one may discover what is within the individual who bears the sign.”

Jacob Boehm (16th century)

Messages of Truth were imparted by the ancient Siddhas and Rishis by way of symbols and myths. It not only brought an easier and better understanding of the cryptic and hidden aspects but also served as guidance to invoke profound Truth. The forms and postures of idols and deities imply different symbolist instructions and guidelines. The forms created by the wise Sages contain the secret paths and dynamics leading to the nectar of existence within our own body. In the manner of symbolist relation the idol flourishes as a language representing the specific attributes of the Absolute.

Each idol represents one certain aspect of the all-pervasive, all-encompassing formless God. A loving and attentive attitude toward a symbol, idol or yantra can provide us with a meaningful insight into our relationship with all aspects of that symbol and its integral energies. The Guru is the divine mirror through whom, we see ourselves. Through the image of the idol or even the form of the Guru we see a mirrored reflection of our own invisible higher nature manifested in form. From this experience one can receive guidance and thereby crystallisation in the path easily and quickly.

Although the external form of the Guru or deity by itself is an important part of a ritual or worship its wholesome validity and truth lies hidden in the quality and depth of attuning ourselves with the symbolised integral energies. A true Tantric ritual is essentially an internal experiencing rather than an external event. The outer ritualistic form called Pooja, in Sanskrit (Vali Padu in Tamil), serves as a lens through which the participant focuses on meeting his own psychic energies with the universal energies of the whole towards a specific end.

Devoid of a conscious attuning attitude a ritual by itself possess only a certain power based on the nature of the particular symbols worshiped but its wholesome effect in totality remains un-accessed and limited. The wisdom

revealed by the Siddhas, uncovers a basic insight of deep relevance to our daily life.

The transforming qualities born out of any action are in direct correspondence to the state of awareness through which they are carried out.

LANGUAGES OUR DEITIES SPEAK

Four traditional Hindu images or idols have been discussed based on Yogic interpretations, as per the Oral teachings of the Yogic Siddhas. But before we embark into the ancient world of Yogic symbolism let us read of certain elemental Yogic factors such as Yogic worship, Yogic postures, and Yogic gestures.

YOGIC WORSHIP

All creative forms of the Universe are repositories of consciousness. Every form contains the matrix, the existential essence and is endowed with the power of existence, by which the reality of the forms is experienced. The essence of reality is the conscious centre felt within the matrix of forms. Man as the self-conscious entity is in the space within the ambit of feeling.

A Yogi considers an idol a divine matrix. The idol is understood to embody the Yogi's own inherent possibilities. To awaken these inherent but hidden possibilities, the Yogi attunes to the specific Idol to invoke the higher intelligence demonstrated by that form. If you recall we discussed 'perceptive sensitivity' in the Chapter of Inter-Being; how everything resonates with each other... so on; when a Yogi relates and attunes to an Idol through his sensitivity, he experiences the characteristics of the Idol as a qualitatively awakened energy in his own body-mind.

An Idol is a divine milieu of embarking on an inner journey in a Yogic way. This is Yogic Worship or Upasana.

ASANA

Yogic Posture

Nowadays people have grown familiar with yogic postures and practice them for reasons like health, meditation etc. In Astanga Yoga the eight limbs of the Yogic system, Yogic Posture stands as the third limb. Although this aspect has grown popular amongst the masses, it is unfortunate that the awareness of certain implications remains unseen. A few I have discussed below.

Just as a person has his own unique constitution, similarly each Yogic posture has its own unique features. When a yogic posture is practiced for a long period, it has the ability to invoke a particular mind-set.

For instance if Dhanur Asana, the archery posture, is practiced for an

appropriately long period it invokes an archer's sharpness of mind.

Vriksha Asana, the tree posture, can invoke a strong grounding for the practitioner. And so on.

What is imperative is the compatibility between the psychophysical constitution of a person and the yogic posture. It is highly inadvisable for an individual to practice too many Yogic postures no matter what the purpose or reason.

For instance: if a person of Vatha based constitution is suffering the imbalance of an aggravated Vatha dosham, Yogic postures demanding the holding of breath will tend to further accelerate and aggravate Vatham, thereby bringing harm.

As another instance; if a person already suffering hypertension must not practice any or all back bending Asanas as it is incompatible to his constitution. It accelerates the blood to rush towards the head.

In this manner, the compatibility between an asana and the practitioner's constitution and state of health is imperative.

On the other hand, a person suffering ill health can also use Asanas as a healing technique. Some Asanas can be recommended for a specific and short period of time.

Let us say a person is suffering from intense heat in the head region and severe throbbing headaches. Due to his intense, meditative practices the downward moving Apana has mixed with the upward moving prana, which is what is causing headaches. All that is needed to bring him back to health is to separate the mixed Apana and direct it back downwards. The Asana or posture such as Pavana Mukta Asana (leg lock posture), Utthan padasana (raised leg posture), Apana Asana (leg folded resting posture), Naukasana (boat posture), Vayu kishkasana (wind eliminating posture) and Paschimothasana (front bending with stretched back posture) can be recommended for a specified period of time.

Understandably, one is not ordinarily expected to know and decide the Asana that fits his constitution. It is the Master's responsibility to decide on an appropriate and compatible asana to be practiced by the individual. In this way a few correctly selected asana's are verily enough as a practice.



ASANA SIDDHI

The great Sage Padanjali says in his yogic aphorisms, 'Sthiram Sugam Asana' - Sthiram means still, or stable; Sugam means happiness.

The Human mind hangs onto a particular thing until it finds its fulfilment. This fulfilment results in an experience of happiness. After man finds/ feels either hatred or fulfilled happiness from something, he will not hang onto it anymore and is freed from its clutches. This is typically and characteristically human nature. Sage Padanjali urges to use this tendency of the human mind constructively and positively. He reminds, when you find fulfilled happiness or contentment from something you transcend it.

This simple understanding is put to use in the practice of yogic asanas too. After a body becomes still and grounded in a particular posture and abides, a comforting happiness arises from this abidance and it enables the person to naturally transcend body consciousness or the physical domain. This is true Asana Siddhi, the accomplishment of postures. It can be described similar to, 'When the shoe fits, you don't have to think about it', so too, the true purpose of a yogic posture is to bring the body into a cohesive and integrated state that acts as a domain or platform from where you can roll deeper into the inner worlds.

The asanas revealed by Siddha Guru Agasthiyar in His work Agasthiyar Saumiya Sagaram (1206 verses) and in the work Agasthiyar Pari Puranam (verses 1200), are the nine asanas related with the nine planets. A practitioner abiding in these nine yogic postures gets attuned with the planetary vibrations in harmonious way. These asanas are Kotreeka Asana, Simha Asana, Badra Asana, Mukta Asana, Gomuka Asana, Veera Asana, Padma Asana, Mayura Asana and Suka Asana. He further speaks of the five stages of Prana Vidya; six types of Pratiyakara; six kinds of Dharanas; ten types of Dhyanam (meditation) and five kinds of Samadhi.

Siddha Thirumoolar, the Guru of Siddha Bogar, sings in His divine work Thirumanthiram of the eight kinds of asanas: Padma Asana, Badra Asana, Gomuka Asana, Singa Asana, Sothira Asana, Veera Asana, Swastika Asana and Suka Asana. But he describes everything to permute by mingling with the other extending to hundreds and hundreds of asanas. Thus He sings in verse 563 of Thirumanthiram. All the Siddhas speak of Suka Asana as a comfortable posture suitable to all.

Apart from this, when I was with the folk Siddha teachers of the Oral tradition I came to learn of the other branches of yogic paths, such as:

Swara Yoga

The science of yoga dealing with different pranic rhythms along with the five elements within the body and the esoteric five birds' astrology is called Pancha Patchi Vidya.

Agni Yoga

The yoga of fire, dealing with the five-fold heat, is called the Pancha Agni Vidya.

Atchi Yoga

Atchi Yoga revealed by Siddha Saint Ramalingam deals with the yogic incorporation of eye manipulation and the removal of inertia associated with the different colours symbolised by the Seven Curtains veiling self-realisation through His Oral teachings.

Parianga Yoga

Parianga Yoga is yogic art of Sex. It is how human passions can unfold inner mysteries. The higher left hand tantric practices involve a few others such as Summohana Sakaleekarana Vidya – invoking the personal deity in the act of divine union etc.

Neelakanda Ajapa Yoga

This yoga deals with inner pranic circulation without depending upon respiration of external air and the removal of the poison from oneself by yogic manipulation of the throat area, called as the house of air element.

Kalpa Yoga

This yoga is kept secret. It involves Vaasi Yoga of Ancient Siddhas as inner alchemical practice along with the intake of external alchemy and following of Kalpa therapy by living a specially arranged lifestyle in a special hut. The details of this have been spoken by Siddha Sage Agasthiyar, in his cryptic work “Antharanga Dheksha Vidhi”, written in the twilight language.

The Kalpa therapy is more advanced than the traditional Pancha Karma therapy followed in Ayurvedic Rasayana system and incorporates strict disciplines, expensive treatment; direct supervision of the Master and is tedious to accomplish in practical way.

Some other styles of yoga are Amritha Yoga, Siva Raja Yoga, Kapala Yoga, Chandra Yoga and Surya Yoga...etc

Each of the Siddhas has spoken of different varieties of yogic paths under the name of Astanga Yoga. But their unique revelation is ‘ Vaasi Yoga’.

All of these paths should be experienced under the guidance of a Master. Also it is a vast inner science and beyond the scope of this book. I move onto the next topic...



MUDRA

Yogic gesture

In the Siddha Tattwa system discussed in Section Two our hands are classified as one of the five organs of action. (Karmendriya). Monkeys and apes use their hands for locomotion but human hands can move and form gestures. Human hands can be used to express feelings; feelings such as love, victory, anger, despair, failure, indicating directions etc. Hands express ourselves. To carry commands from the spine and to receive various touch modalities, thousands of different kinds of nerves are found in the human hand. Based on these we differentiate between various sensations of heat, fire, the chill of ice, softness of the skin, roughness of sand etc.

The ancient Siddhas structured an entire system of yogic practices based on the use of hands, aimed at healing the mind-body and for the spiritual experience of integrated body-mind-spirit. These specific hand applications are called Mudras. The word Mudra literally means gesture, indication or seal.

In Yogic practices, Mudras are always accompanied by Bandas. Banda means restraining, binding etc. Mudras and Bandas are used for both, creating barriers within the energy circuit of the body as well as redirecting the energy, which would otherwise dissipate outwards. If a Mudra is the Channeliser then a Banda can be described as its Impeller. Mudras can be used for internal channelisation and/or to reveal a particular state, attitude or even to influence something external.

Each finger of our hand attributes to each of the five elements.

The thumb	Ether
Fore finger	Air
Middle finger	Fire
Ring finger	Water
Little finger	Earth

We have already seen how the five elements are always underlying fundamental factors in the function of the microcosm as well as macrocosm. Based on these elemental attributes the ancient Siddhas revealed different Mudras; different finger positions of varying permutations and combinations. Mudras designed by the Siddhas deliberate a specific nature of healing in the body as well as unfold the inner spiritual dimensions of the practitioner.

Lord Dakshinamurthi, the primal Guru, was seated under the banyan tree along with the four disciples; the primal Sages. The disciples asked their Lord several questions related to Truth, which the Lord

answered but this only led them to ask even more questions. Finally, the Lord revealed the direct answer, an experience of Truth through Silence with the Chin Mudra.



We now begin a journey into Yogic worship that explains how a practitioner obtains teachings from an idol and where this takes him. This chapter makes known the esoteric significance of worshipping a deity in the Yogic way. The Siddhas have spoken and described hidden secrets that reveal on attuning with the deities. Of course, other than the Yogic aspect of attuning to deities, Devotion, Alchemy, Cosmology, Gnana etc. are also some of the others used to kindle oneness with the Divine. Here we have touched upon only the Yogic aspect of interpretation.

*"If you have to do pooja of Goddess Maheswari, who shines as light,
Listen the pleasant mudras, I reveal you,
Who can know these 'Adhi mudras', the primal one?
With surging grace, keep the attitude of mudra in your mind,
Listen the six mudras, now.
First one is the Avahana mudra, the real one
Next one is Dhabana mudra, the establishing one
Oh the sincere! The very next one is the Oli mudra, the lightening!"*

-Verse 360

*"The muora that makes oneness, that is Nirvana mudra,
Sobini mudra is the next one, which is consistent!
The last is Mohini mudra, the enchanting one!
With an inquisitive mind, receive all
The six mudras from the Sat Guru of Siva Yoga,
Then when you do Maheswari pooja,
Offer these six mudras as a worship to Her!"*

-Verse 361, "Oceanic Moon" by Siddha sage Agasthiyar
(Soumiya Sagaram)





Chin Mudra Ganapathi

Lord Vinayaka, Lord Anjaneya, Lord Krishna and Lord Natarajar are the four deities illustrated and spoken of in this book. Each one has been explained describing their bodily stances and its implication; the cryptic symbolism and how a yogic practitioner inculcates the same into himself in order to kindle the divine fire of Grace.

Reading through the pages that follow, the symbolism and the interpretations come out strikingly similar and almost common. Moreover, not only the said four but most Indian deities are illustrated in similar poses and point toward the same messages, so it can obviously bring one to question the purpose of so many different deities. Is there, something different implied through each of them?

Although the vital messages the deities send, intermingle and interconnect, crossing pathways, sounding and appearing similar, each of them shine a different colour, exude a classic fragrance and spread a distinctive sentiment of their own. As a yogic practitioner matures in his Sadhana he recognises and embraces these sentiments within himself. This full-embrace with an idol unfolds, deepens, expands and eventually emerges with a 'new look'; turning into the form of another deity and so on until he is embraced by the Self - the pre-reflective substratum of both, form and formless.

THE WORSHIP OF LORD VINAYAKA

The deity Lord Vinayaka has many names varying from people to people of India. Some of these names are Ganesha, Ganapathi, Vigneshwara, Vinayaka, Pillaiyaar and many more.

In the ancient Idols of Lord Vinayaka, we find four hands - two hands on the right side of his body and two hands on the left. One of his left hand displays the 'Mahamudra' formation and the other one carries a twisted twine or rope. One of the right hands displays a formation of the 'Chin Mudra'; and the other is seen carrying a goad. The Lord's left leg is seen tucked and folded up on his seat whereas his right leg is placed on the ground. The tusk on his right is broken.

The central significance by way of yogic interpretation taken from the idol of Lord Vinayaka is 'settling in one's grounding'. And the practice incorporates 'opening the ribcage'. Therefore, yogic worship of a particular Lord guides you to settle and establish in your own grounding.

The left tusk indicates the Moon channel. The significance of the broken right tusk implies the removal of the existing blockage in the sun channel. The instruction imparted by the potbelly of Lord Vinayaka is, the practitioner must inhale as much air as possible through the left nostril to fill the belly, during retention of breath.

Observation of his left leg shows the heel positioned so that it presses firmly against the Mooladharam chakra. From the pressure exerted by the heel, the inhaled prana is compressed at the Mooladharam and made to mix with the Apana (downward moving vital air). The cryptic Tamil word for 'foot' is 'Kaal' and Kaal also means breath. Thus, the position of the left leg of Lord Vinayaka indicates the method of arousing the Kundalini Sakthi.

As mentioned earlier the lunar breath functions in measures of 16" (exhaling 16" whereas inhaling only 12"); and the solar breath functions, inhaling 8" and exhales 12". Therefore, when the lunar breath is made to mingle with the solar breath, naturally the impetus of exhaling 16" is brought down to 12" because of using right nostril exhalation. The result attained is the saving of 4" of breath. These retained 4" intrinsically travel downwards through the moon channel and come to settle in the Mooladharam Chakra. With this form of breath retention, the retained Prana throbs, expands and fans the fire of the Mooladharam chakra. By this blazing fire the posterior sun channel eventually opens as the blockage is removed.

The Tamil woman-saint Awaiyar hints at this fact when she says,

"Kundaliyadhanil Koodiya Asabai..."

"The unspoken mantra merged with Kundalini"

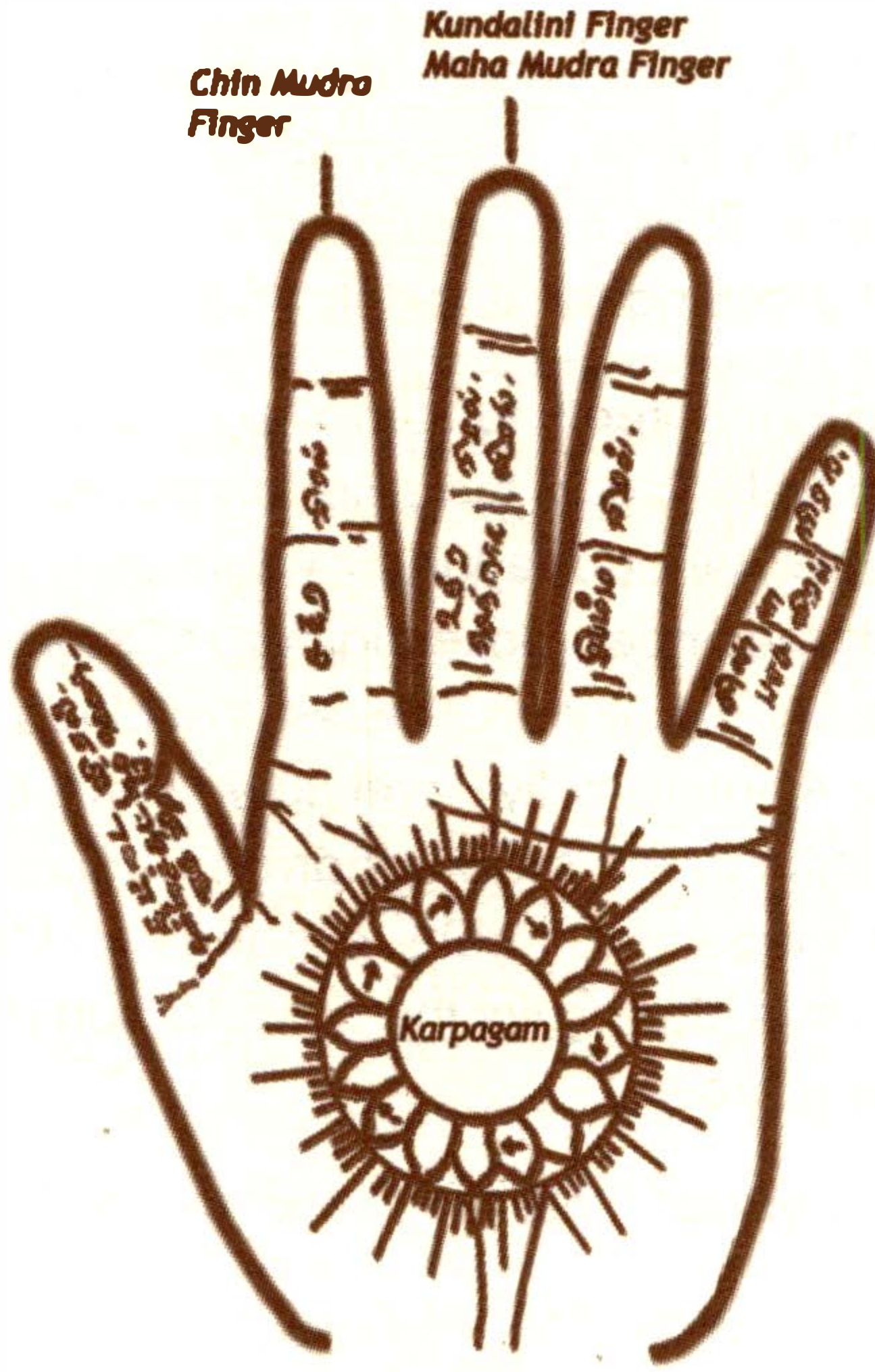
The same has been further clarified by way of a small explanation.

"For a house to get electric power supply the electrical wiring inside the house has been completed. Bulb holders and switches have been installed and even the bulbs have been inserted into the holders. The connection with the main power line in the street has already been made. In this condition, the bulbs are ready to burn. All that is needed is to press the switch."

So where is the switch to awaken the Kundalini?

The Mahamudra in the left hand of Lord Vinayaka points this out. The middle finger of the left hand presses upon the fruit held within the palm, in turn pressing the centre of the palm. In the picture given for your reference all his fingers are seen curled around the fruit, thus achieving the same result as pressing on the centre of the palm.

The vital nerve centre or Varma spot capable of arousing the Kundalini is located in the middle of the left-hand palm. As soon as this secret switch is pressed with the sharpness of the left middle finger the process of awakening the Kundalini Sakthi begins; this process is indicated by the nerve-like twisted twine or rope held in the raised left hand.



LEFT HAND

Application of Left hand in Yogic Practice

"சக்ர விரலொன்று சக்தியாம் செந்நாக
உக்ர விரலொன்றும் ஊறுதந்த - வக்ரமாம்
சின்னவிரல், கட்டைவிரல், சிம்ம விரலோடே
பொன்னான கையிரண்டும் பூ"

After performing this yogic worship for a long enough duration a small swelling begins to appear in the centre of the left palm where the secret nerve centre related with the Kundalini is situated. (The legendary "gooseberry in the palm" is this swelling).

"If within your body, you perceive the flame

You can feel (the sense of) gooseberry in the palm of your hand".

Awai Kural (221) Written by the woman Siddha Awaiyar

"The thing, which is in the palm of your hand

Can be truly ignited by the real Guru."

Pampatti Siddhar Padalgal, Verse-12 by Pampatti Siddhar

*“Oh Great effulgence of Grace! Arut Perum Jothi
Having given me the Karpagam in my palm
You made me to perform miracles”*

Arut Perum Jothi Agaval-verse 271, Siddha Saint Ramalingam
(Karpagam- wish fulfilling tree)

In the ancient terminology used by the Siddhas, Prana has been cryptically referred to as ‘Pari’. One of the meanings of the word Pari is Horse; an untamed and wild Horse, which clearly expresses the nature of Prana. This practice pursued to its utmost potential gives a fiery blaze to the rising Prana with the fire of the Kundalini and unless it is controlled or channelised it carries the possibility of a few adversities. It can either bring harm to the physical body as in, ‘frying the nerves’ or haemorrhage. Psychically, the practitioner could lose consciousness and fall and hang in a locked state of consciousness.

That is why the conduct of channelising the flow of Prana holds a place of great importance. If the practitioner awakens an immense power of Prana in an agitated way, this very agitation reflects in his activities making them rash and restless. It bombards his nervous system, his psyche and his surroundings.

How then is the practitioner to proceed with the wild surge of fire thus aroused and how is it to be channelised in a balanced mode?

This is depicted by the Chinmudra formation in His right hand. Let us understand what Chinmudra is. Hold the right palm facing outward and the hand slightly raised. Bend the right forefinger down so that its tip presses firmly against the tip of the thumb. This is known as Chin Mudra. When correctly formed and used the Chinmudra is capable of smoothly channelising the unleashed energy of the Kundalini Sakthi and keeping it under control; just as a goad is used to control and guide an elephant! This is indicated by the goad in His other right hand.

The form of Lord Vinayaka was created by the Yogic Siddhas to indicate these vital centres of Yogic importance in the body.

Also, Siva Vakkiyar Siddhar says in his Verse (131):

*“O dumb folk, who are performing elaborate rituals for the dead!
Can the Gods ever turn into stones? I can only laugh at you.
The first-born son (Lord Vinayaka) of the three-eyed God (Lord Siva)
is already merged within you. See Him!”*

-Siva Vakkiyar, Verse 131

Performing the above mentioned Yogic worship continuously leads to an experience of a balanced and channelised stream of pranic current along the central channel, or Sushumna nadi. Lord Vinayaka's trunk signifies this.

*“Leaving the left and right hands,
Those who feed by the trunk would not succumb.
Those who forego sleep and
Remain vigilant need not die,
But live forever.”*

Thirumoolar's Thirumanthiram, Verse 801

*One, who masters the art of inhaling through the central channel, never
fatigues. And one who meditates thus, foregoing food and sleep attains the
deathless state.*

Now let us proceed to see what the full-embrace of Lord Vinayaka unfolds
as...





THE WORSHIP OF LORD ANJANEYA

Even the deity Lord Anjaneya has many names varying from the people to people of India. A few of them have been mentioned here: Hanuman, Hanumantha, Maruthi, Sanjeevi, etc.

Lord Anjaneya, the Great, is the son of Goddess Anjana Devi, (the Goddess of the eyes) and Lord Vayu (the Wind God). The word Anjana means the 'eye'.

The external pulsating movement as the wind or Vayu even occurs within us as exhalation and inhalation of our breath. The Yogic worship of Lord Anjaneya is an attempt to discover the inner meanings of this process.

As we just read, worshiping Lord Vinayaka is the process of inhaling the prana, retaining it and thereby awakening the Mooladharam chakra. Now the advent of Lord Anjaneya brings the significant implementation of harmoniously engaging both eyes in the process of distinguishing life force (prana) from the breath and arousing the Kundalini fire upwards. This is implied by the very name of Lord Anjaneya.

Anjaneya signifies floating in the way of the Wind; Prana navigated by the eyes.

“Attempting to form (an image of) Vinayaka has ended up in forming the monkey,” is a popular Tamil adage. The true meaning of this Tamil saying is to be understood through its mystical context. (Here, “Vinayaka” means ‘the breath’ and ‘monkey’ means ‘Anjaneyar’.)

A picture of Lord Anjaneya has been given to help the readers to visualise as they read on.

He is seen carrying the Sanjeevi Hill on the palm of his left hand. His right hand grips his weapon; the mace. His tail is raised vertically behind his back reaching upwards all the way to his head, brushing the spine. His form is seen soaring.

The herbs of eternal life (Sanjeevi) on the left hand indicate the breath of eternal life is in the left hand. The hill carried upon the left hand also denotes the great life force contained within our left palm. The centre of the left palm is the secret key switch for arousing the Kundalini nerve. This is the secret of Mahamudra. ‘Sanjeevini’ is a panacea, the remedy that revives, rejuvenates a person again and again. Internally it is located in the centre of the left palm, which is also the location of fire. To indicate the Yogic practice of pressing that secret switch Lord Anjaneya is seen carrying the gigantic weight of the mountain on his left palm. The technique of arousing the Kundalini by exerting pressure on the mystic switch in the centre of the left palm is hinted at in this imagery also.

When aroused the Kundalini Sakthi rises up through the central channel (anterior to the spinal cord) in its upward journey towards the neck. This is depicted by Lord Anjaneya's tail raised vertically upwards to his head, slightly brushing against the spine.

The mace (also called vajrayudham) symbolically represents the spine. Observe the manner in which the mace is held by His right hand and the manner in which the thumb of His right hand is seen gripping the mace; it presses against the tip of the forefinger denoting the Chinmudra. As the Kundalini rises up ferociously, it is brought under control by the means of the Chinmudra. The upheld mace illustrates this fact with its rising stem in the form of the three-fold twisted rope above the Chinmudra grip, ending with a heavy spiralled top.

Now let us consider the facial expressions or features of Lord Anjaneya. As characteristic of a monkey, the upper part of the mouth is bulging excessively with both lips tightly closed. Let us understand its meaning. This excessive bulging around the mouth indicates one of the techniques to be followed by practitioners during their yogic worship of Lord Anjaneya.

The technique of exerting a downward pressure by the tip of the tongue pressed against the tendon which joins the inside of the lower lip with the outer lower gum causes the mind to become absorbed in meditation. In other words, the mind gets absorbed in a single object by the pressure applied on the above-said tendon and thereby the associated vital centre. One can relate to this in an obvious way from the following instinctive human activities:

When a couple in love embrace, for the man to attract the woman's whole-hearted attention towards himself, he holds his lady's chin with his right hand, placing his right-hand thumb and forefinger below the middle of her lower lip and his right forefinger beneath the chin, exerting a slight pressure.

Even young children are fondled on the chin in a similar manner. The thumb and index fingers are employed in the same manner as mentioned above to attract their attention.

Let us speak of the form of Lord Anjaneya carrying the Sanjeevi Hill on his left hand (the base of the life force) with his tail vertically erect, brushing against his spine and pointing towards his head. This image represents the mudra indicating the aroused state of Kaala Agni (breath-fire) due to kumbhaka (retention). The bulging, reddened front portion of the mouth and the mace-weapon gripped by the right hand in Chinmudra together constitute the Mudra indicating the condition of quenching the Kaala agni by extracting Gnanappaal (the milk of divine wisdom).

When Lord Anjaneya was fetching the Sanjeevi Hill on his hand, he was extremely affected by the fire of thirst. At that time he employed the technique of extracting Gnanappaal in the form of saliva to quench his fiery thirst. These

mystical secrets are to be discovered in the course of Yogic practise only. Later, this technique of extracting saliva leads to the secretion of ambrosia (Amritham).

Idaikkattu Siddhar sings:

*“Go on milking the milk of saliva.
Go on milking to fill your stomach full.”*

-Verse 108

Lord Anjaneya depicts the art of the deathless state. The palm of his left hand is the base for the ambrosia of ‘Sanjeevi Hill’.

Sri Ramalingam Swami says the same in his song:

*“O great light of grace,
Arut Perum Jothi!
Having given the Karpagam,
The wish-fulfilling tree in my palm,
You are commanding me
To perform miracles!”*

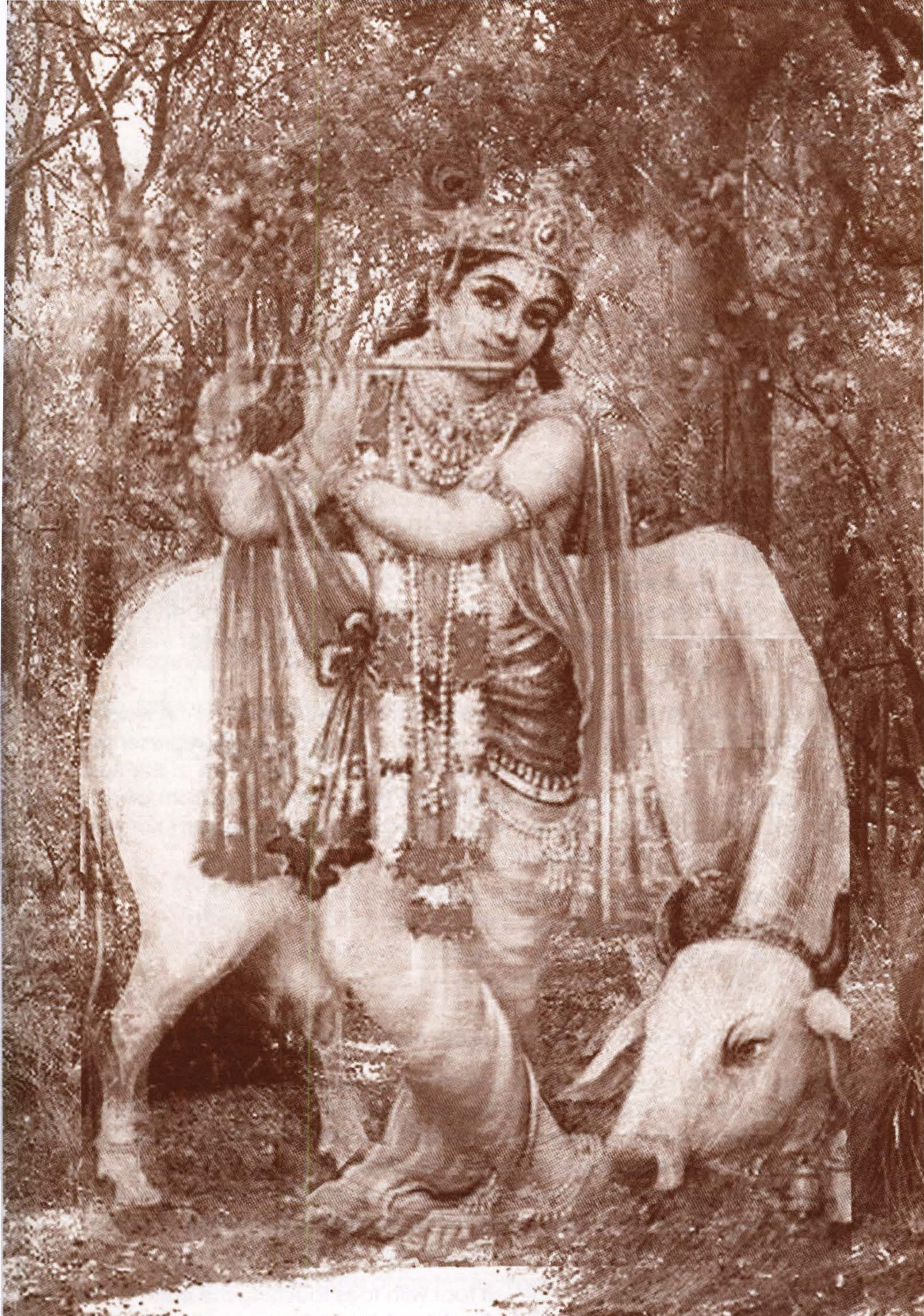
Arut Perum Jothi Agaval – Verse 271, Siddha Saint Ramalingam

Conclusively, the worship of Lord Anjaneya shows the way to swallow the secreted nectar and direct it to flow downwards. This happens by quenching the fire of breath (Kaala agni) through swallowing the secreted milk of wisdom (gnana pal). And it is done by an upward pressure exerted by the tip of the tongue upon the tendon, which joins the centre of the inside of the upper lip with the centre at the outer upper gum.

This instance is found illustrated by the excessive bulging in the upper area of his mouth. The vital spot in this region when stimulated influences the cerebrospinal fluid in the skull.

After the worship of Lord Anjaneya, let us enjoy the full-embrace of Lord Krishna...





LORD KRISHNA

THE WORSHIP OF LORD KRISHNA

A darshan of Lord Krishna is enchanting, intoxicating and allows one to lose oneself by crossing over his fragmentary waking consciousness and drowning deep into the beauty of the inner world, Krishna Loka.

The yogic understanding of Lord Krishna implies - 'adrift in the ocean of sensitivity, absorbed in ones inner Bhava'.

When we observe the idol of Lord Krishna we see both, his left and right eyes are directed towards the right end of the flute held in his hands. His lips are set against the single hole at the left end of the flute, blowing his breath into it. His left hand holds the mid-portion of the flute, whereas the right hand holds the end portion of it.

Observe the sacred feet of Lord Krishna; He is seen standing with his left foot firmly placed upon the ground. His right foot is crossing over to the left side of his left foot, pressing down on the ground with the right big toe and his heel is raised above the earth. Behind Lord Krishna stands a cow. The facial expressions of the Lord indicate deep absorption with which he is immersed in the music coming from his flute; the left side of his back is leaning against the warm body of the cow.

The whole-body Mudra revealed by this divine image is known as 'the worship of the flute'. The gaze of both his left and right eyes (symbolically representing the moon and the sun respectively) is directed to the right end of the flute; and both hands are engaged in holding the flute. The effect of harmonising both the left and right eyes is a mudra indicating the technique of knowing the *eye of wisdom* (Gnaanakkan).

*"When the eyes of sun and moon
Ever in their orbits, unite,
This is liberation."*

-Verse 132

So declares the respected Siddha treatise Awai Kural.

Consider the standing posture of Lord Krishna. The flute is held on the right side of Lord Krishna's face; his lips are set against the single hole at the left end of the flute; and his left hand is crossing over to the right side, holding the middle part of the flute, while the right hand holds the end portion of it. The left hand taken to the right side indicates the importance of exerting pressure in the left armpit. (Anyone who holds the left hand in such a position will feel this pressure).

The right foot is crossing over the left foot with toes touching the earth on its left side. And the left side of Lord Krishna's back is leaning against the back of the cow.

The aspects depicted by His posture are all simple techniques conducive to sending the breath current out through the right nostril, which is a fundamental requirement in Yogic techniques. Several other idols and statues also signify the above described phenomenon of the inner communion of the moon with the sun.

INTERIORISING KRISHNA

In ancient images Yogis are illustrated in their seated posture using their Y shaped armrest (Yoga dhandam). This armrest is used to exert a pressure on the nerve centre found in the left armpit. With the exerted pressure, in a short while the flow of breath functioning through the left nostril shifts and starts flowing in through the right nostril.

These techniques of shifting the breath from one channel to another influences the body in different ways and can be put to use appropriately and constructively. One such instance is described. There is tremendous fire and heat generated by the Mooladharam chakra on the awakening of the Kundalini Sakthi. One can put to use the technique of shifting the nostril breath from the right to left on experiencing excessive heat in the body. It helps reduces the excessive heat.

To shift the breath to Left nostril:

Seated technique:

To shift the breath to the left nostril (called lunar breath) one can be seated in a position with right palm firmly pressing the floor to the right. Knees are bent with the heels as close to the buttocks as possible, allowing the legs to fall to the right. Feet are placed one over the other. Then with the left middle finger the tendon extending from the top of the left big toe to the ankle is touched. If this tendon is fiddled with this finger for some time, the flow of breath shifts to the left nostril.

Reclining technique:

One can recline on a bed with the right side down and the right hand kept below the head to support it. By this, the 'solar breath', right nostril flow of breath changes into 'lunar breath', flow of breath through the left nostril. This shift happens because in this reclining position the right armpit is under pressure, as the right side of the back is in contact with the floor or bed; the right foot is also under pressure because of the left foot placed upon it.

The right and the left breath each have their own distinctive nature. The right nostril breath gives clarity and a balanced and alert awareness; and as the

left nostril breath is the origin of duality, it gives rise to dreams, imaginings and emotions. In order to maintain the flow of breath always on the right side the yogis keep their yoga-dhandam under their left armpit.

Reiterating in brief the yogic journey idolised by the form of Lord Krishna, as the awakened Kundalini rises through the Sushumna channel it opens and reveals several inner mysteries associated with the chakras. A practitioner absorbed in the divine mysteries of a certain chakra, moves to the next by the graceful benediction of the presiding deities of that chakra. A journey travelled by the sentiment of inner enchantment and intoxication is what Lord Krishna expresses. Hence, the central and vital sentiment that radiates is the technique of mental absorption or Manolaya Tantra, leading to deep meditation or samadhi. Such is the worship of Lord Krishna!





Nataraj

THE WORSHIP OF LORD NATARAJAR - Amritha Siddhi

Lord Natarajar is a depiction of dancing Siva! The idol of Lord Natarajar includes all spiritual and mystical sentiments. Thus the ancients have wisely portrayed Lord Natarajar with nothing missed.

HE is the Ultimate Self Portrait.

Travelling His form carries one to Him. He is seen standing on his right leg with his foot pressing down on the back of Muyalaka, a demon lying on the ground on his belly. Lord Natarajar's left leg is bent slightly at the knee and raised, crossing over to his right side. The number of arms illustrated is four. One of his left arms is extended outward to his right and held parallel to the left leg. In the centre of his left palm, a fire is seen burning. One of his front-facing right hands is held in the formation of the 'Abhaya hasta mudra', the Mudra bestowing blessing and fearlessness. In His other right hand, He grasps a 'Damaru' (a miniature drum).

The neck and throat area of Lord Natarajar is blue in colour and wound around it is a cobra snake with raised hood. From behind both the right and left sides of His head, long matted locks of hair flow, stretching outwards. The thick lock of hair atop his head is seen neatly bundled into a small tower with Mother Ganga and the crescent moon occupying the upper left side. Between the eyebrows is the sacred third eye. From his left earlobe hangs a single hoop earring and a small snake hangs down ornamenting it.

The ancient Ones have revealed for the practitioners of Vaasi Yoga, the posture of Lord Natarajar to be understood as the Mudra itself.

The rapturous dancing pose of Lord Natarajar holds both, a microcosmic as well as a macrocosmic explanation. The macrocosm includes the sun, moon, the various planets and constellations, as well as everything beyond that; whereas microcosm includes the entire functioning within the human body.

Now let us consider in depth the central meaning this mudra symbolises and the significance it holds in the yogic worship of the idol of Lord Natarajar.

Muyalaka, the demon, stomped under the right foot of the Lord denotes the total subjugation of all desire.

Lord Natarajar seen standing on his right foot denotes the breath to be exhaled through the Surya saram or solar breath i.e. right nostril. His raised left foot implies the breath to be inhaled through the Chandra saram or lunar breath i.e. left nostril.

Muyalaka, the demonic ego trapped beneath the Lord's right foot is denied any freedom and thereby kept under control. If you notice, there is firmness

with which the Lord's right foot is positioned on the ground. The imagery of the trapped demon and the firmness with which he is trapped by the right foot, both, guide the practitioner to empty out (Rechaka) the remaining air through the right nostril and not through the left after breath retention.

Commonly, the Abhaya Hasta Mudra formation, displayed near the stomach is said to convey the bestowal of grace and protection. But the Yogic context explains this mudra to denote kumbhaka (retention) of the inhaled breath (poorakam), along with cessation of all activity. This grace-bestowing Abhaya Hasta Mudra of his right hand literally says: Hold it (the prana) here, in this manner.

*"The left leg is seen raised up,
The right one is lowered with a malady.
O my son, know the upraised foot to be the moon,
And the lowered one to be the sun."*

Gnanam Verse-17, by Siddha Kaga Busundar

*"O girl of wisdom,
Inhale through Idakala, the left nostril,
And exhale through the right, and then,
Retain there your prana as Nandhi, bull of Siva. . . .
This is indeed the way to
Seek Lord Siva."*

Gnaanakhumi Verse -64, by Vaalai Swami of Madurai

The idol of the Dancing Natarajar incorporates within itself the journey of the Kundalini Sakthi from the Mooladharam until the Kundalini is led to the Grand Reunion.

There is an inner significance of one of his left hands being stretched parallel to the raised left leg. In this stance - in which the right leg is firmly planted on the ground and the left leg is raised, bent at the knee and stretched outwards towards the right. While one left hand is stretched rightwards, above and parallel to the raised left thigh - the whole lower body is slightly twisted to the right keeping the spine and torso straight. This entire bodily stance acts as a trigger in exciting the life force of the fire in the centre of the left palm. It is clearly conveyed by the fire, (one of the five elements) seen burning in the centre of the other left hand.

All the mannerisms described above work together and expound the secret of the Kundalini Sakthi residing in the Mooladharam chakra to be aroused by the means of life force called prana.

*“Taught me the writ of Ida and Pingala
Shown me the head lying in the end of sushumna,
The unspoken Ajapa mingled in Kundalini
Explicitly uttered to awaken it,
The raging flame of Mooladharam
Imparted the skill of raising by leg”*

(leg – prana)

Vinayakar Agaval, written by the woman Siddha Awaiyar

The awakened Kundalini is then taken through the central channel upwards to the top. This is brought about by neutralising the dual flow of left and right (i.e. Ida and Pingala nadis) for then, it naturally navigates the pranic current to flow through the central channel (sushumna nadi). The pranic current in the Mooladharam consequently awakens the prana and then on in all subsequent chakras. The indrawn pranic flow finally reaches the eyebrow centre.

In the eyebrow area is found an extremely fine aperture, similar to the fine thread-like tube found in the centre of the stem of a lotus. This is the true Triveni Sangamam, the place of confluence of the three channels, right, left and middle and is also known as Suzhi Munai or Brahmarandhra on the sushumna channel.

In actuality, Suzhi Munai is known to be the tenth aperture and is normally closed. So when the fire and the pranic current flow to the eye brow-centre it melts the blockage responsible for holding this aperture closed. Thereafter it enters and moves further upwards. But when first the blockage melts from the heat of the fire and the throbbing pranic current, there is a downward release of water composed of both Pitta and Kapha. This water must be expelled from the body and should not be mistaken to be Amritha (nectar).

In order to prepare the body the Ancient Siddhas in their Kalpa system of purification recommend the purification of three areas, the uvula, the throat region and the basal area or Mooladharam. This removes the deranged Kapha, Pitta and Vatha respectively.

When the Suzhi Munai opens, the Yogi will remain immersed in Samadhi, completely indrawn into a trance for a duration ranging from a few months to a few years. Although the Yogi appears to have no contact with the external world he sees all of the, world within himself.

After the third eye or Suzhi Munai has been opened, consciousness with the Prana travels further upward until it settles in its Source. This has been already described earlier. It is now that the secretion of ‘Amritham’, also known as the ‘milk of divine wisdom’ happens and flows downwards, occupying his whole and nourishing all dimensions.

Immediately after the subsequent opening of the aperture of Suzhi Munai, the six Niradhara centres located above the Brahmarandhra at the top of the head are traversed, merging finally in the ultimate state of Dwadhasantham; the twelfth state.

*“Below the head, into the hole of a needle,
Climbing in upstairs made me to gaze skilfully at the sky”*

Azhukanni Siddhar Verses - 14

*“Beyond the middle of tongue, mouth, ear, nose,
From the base touching the top, through the central street, chant the
(experience of) Veda by salutation to the Mother (nature).”*

Sutra Gnanam, Verse-12, by Siddha Sage Valmiki.

*“Go on milking to remain deathless
Go on milking the milk, being in the head.*

Verse 107

*Go on milking the milk flowing steadily
Go on milking the milk oozing in the skull of head.”*

Verse 109

*Go on milking so that the milk can fall in the Kalasam (bowl)
Go on milking it so that it may flow through the Kandanam.”*

Verse 110

*“Go on milking the milk that comes above uvula
Go on milking the milk that is being segregated in Andam.*

Verse 112

Idaikattu Siddhar songs

Milk – Nectar, Skull- Inside the head where nectar is created

Kalasam – stomach, Kandanam – inside of throat

Andam- literally means cosmos. Here, the cosmos within the head in Yogic experience.

As Paramatma resides in the centre, at the top of the head, that part forms the highest point, like the peak of Mount Meru. Soma Jalam or ambrosia is flowing in the centre of the upper skull, above the Suzhi Munai (the aperture behind

the centre of the eyebrows). It is through this aperture (also known as the lunar region) that the essence flows into the rest of the body.

The whole process described above is portrayed in the Idol of Lord Natarajar.

Moreover, there are some hidden implications of the way Lord's hair flows, as illustrated in the visual image. The matted locks atop his head are twisted and tied into a Gopuram (tower shape) thereby concealing the source of Mother Ganga (Holy river) is rising from and seen flowing from atop his head. It also displays the crescent moon on its left side. The symbolical bearing of the crescent moon and the flowing matted locks should be understood to represent the phenomena of the segregation of nectar and its, over flow.

In the very same context, the portion atop the head should be taken as the Sahasradalam (field of the thousand petal lotus).

The matted locks of the Lord are seen flowing and spreading outwards on both left and right sides of his head. In other forms of the deity, the hair is normally seen hanging down behind the back. But in this divine image, the hair is seen spreading. For the locks of hair to be in this way His head would need to be constantly turning from side to side, back and forth, from left to right and back with great speed, similar to the churning of curd to make butter. It is by this progressive process of churning does the Gnanappaal, milk of divine wisdom, flow down from the top; the butter of Amritham (ambrosia of deathlessness) separates and flows downward. Its flow is checked at the Lord's holy throat specifically at the uvula. Hence, he got his name; 'Thiruneelakandhar', meaning 'the Lord with the blue throat.'

*"I seek refuge in you, Oh Siva!
Whose throat holds as though it were, the venom
Churned out of the milky ocean!
I seek refuge in You, Oh Siva!
Who with Your Foot quelled the vile murderous death
Who quells all!"*

Koil Thiru Agaval, Verses 1 to4, by Siddha Pattinathar

*"He who is the cause beyond the symbols what avails, writing of
Him in palm scripts?
The uniting Guru (Nandhi) leads you to Him
Unless the matted curled hair growing on a sheep's neck"*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 2937, By Siddha Thirumoolar

There are several grammatical rules in the Tamil Language that help make different contexts; such as 'Santhi Pirithal', i.e. splitting a sentence or a word in a particular way to get a different meaning. The song below makes an entirely different sense when one of my Siddha teachers placed the sentences in a different array.

*“The matted curled hair growing on a sheep’s neck
The Guru who is beyond the symbols, can unite
Unless (this Grace happens) what avails writing (the truth) in palm
script?”*

This verse in a typical Siddha mode of mystical expression indirectly indicates the technique of speedily turning the head right to left and left to right - the cause of the outstretched matted locks of Lord Natarajar. Moreover, as the head turns quickly from side to side the free flowing matted locks roll and twirl over Lord Natarajar’s back and neck. The tremendous friction caused certainly generates a lot of heat.

When a Sadhaka practices in this manner the heat generated makes the hair curl and matted, releasing a pleasant aroma in the process. Enchanted by this aroma the seminal power gets cellularly interiorised. At this occasion, the practitioner should bring his attention into the top of his head and remain absorbed by reciting the unspoken mantra of ‘AUM’. By this yogic practice of revelling in the pleasant aroma released from the hair (sikka) the illumination formed and seen is no less than the glittering of a jewel and is what is known as Sikkamani.

A Story from the Sangam Literature

“Hair has a scent of its own. Yes or No?” This question mooted in the midst of the celebrated Sangam scholars seemed to have elicited a positive proof on one occasion, which took place in the Sangam period.

This is the occasion when Lord Siva opened his third eye and caused the Tamil Poet Nakkeeran to apologize after the poet argued with Him, saying, ‘Hair has no scent of its own, at all’. Poet Nakkeeran eventually agreed with Lord Siva concerning the existence of an inherent aroma in the hair. This fact has not been explicitly mentioned anywhere and nor can we ordinarily sense it; hence, naturally, many people doubt it.

On the occasion wherein poet Nakkeeran argued against the existence of aroma inherent in hair, Lord Siva himself appeared and debated against him. To disclose to the poet who He was, to him alone did he divulge His third eye. Even then, the poet is said to have remained adamant about his opinion, saying, ‘A fault is a fault, even if the third-eye is displayed’. Enraged at this reply the fire of Lord Siva’s third eye reduced Nakkeeran to ashes.

Then complying with the request of the Pandya King, Lord Siva restored Poet Nakkeeran back to life at the Golden Temple Tank. The revived Poet is said to have fervently prayed to Lord Siva to grant him pardon and bless him.”

There is an explanation of these events from the yogic viewpoint.

When Poet *Nakkeeran* argued about hair having no inherent scent, he was in a state of Chariya; filled with mere book knowledge. Lord Siva then opens his third eye and bestows on him 'Nayana Diksha' (initiation through the eyes) for the poet Nakkeeran to realize Truth by direct experience, thus drawing him into the state of Kriya Anushthanam. Because of this, the fire at the base centre (moola agni) gets kindled and scorches him up to the top of his head. The fire burns his hair releasing the aroma peculiar to hair. The poet *Nakkeeran* inhaled this aroma and instantly realized the secret truth about "hair having its own characteristic scent".

APOCALYPSE OF NADA

Symbolic representation of the fire of the Root centre (Moola agni)

When the Kundalini fire at the root centre (Mooladharam chakra) gets aroused, there is a burning sensation that spreads all over the body, from the feet to the top of the head. This fact is symbolically represented in the idolised form of Mother Kali. If one has noticed the various forms of Mother Kali, either Her entire body, from the seat to the crown or just Her head to the crown is shown engulfed in flames. That is what we see when we have darshan of Mother Kali.

The Symbolism of the mini-drum (Udukkai or Damaru)

Last, but not least, let us consider the mudra displayed by the right hand of Lord Natarajar, grasping the mini-drum (Udukkai).

There are four kinds of sounds: viz.

- 1) Sound heard by the ears;
- 2) Sounds of the throat;
- 3) Sounds of thoughts, and
- 4) Subtle sound of AUM.

Of all the five sensory objects known as Pancha Tanmatras, Sound is one; it belongs to the space (Akasa) element. This is the sound transmitted through the tympanum within our ear. Hence, it is capable of perceiving a great variety of sounds and vibrations.

In the Siddha Yogic system when a yogi undertakes the practice of being absorbed in the inner sounds (Nadanu sandhana) and when the prana first reaches the Brahmarandhra (the gate of Brahman), he begins to hear sounds of the ocean, the clouds, and of drums, big and small.

Similarly, when the prana settles well at the Brahmarandhra the yogi hears the sounds of the two-sided drum (Matthalam), the conch, and huge gongs.

And when finally the prana establishes itself totally in the Brahmarandhra, the yogi hears the sounds of tiny cymbals (kinkini), the flute, the veena (a one stringed instrument made with gourd), and the sounds of the cricket (the insect).

With the progress of the Nadanusandhana practice, the gross sounds heard at the beginning start to cease, giving way to subtler sounds. In Yogic literature, it is said these so-called Anahata (literally, ‘uncaused’) sounds have the power of a sharp goad, which can subdue the rutted mind elephant roaming the forests of sensory objects of sounds.

Keeping in view all of the above said explanations we can clearly understand the significance of Lord Natarajar’s right hand grasping the mini-drum (Udukkai). Moreover, it clarifies the implication of the Udukkai (mini-drum) being held closer to the right ear, which is considered an aspect of the space element. The third finger of the right hand, also known as the Kundalini finger, is of vital importance in producing sound from the drum.

*“Intermingling the ‘Vaasi’ with Kundalini in a gentle way
The expansion of prana can happen
Making the raging sound from that entwining
Softly reach the kandam as ‘Yeung’ (I)
The eyebrow that can favour, would be opened
And nectar would start to fall like a fruit that can be taken.
Understand! That is the moment of Kaya Siddhi.”*

Siddha Kailaya Sattaimuni Mun.Gnanam-100, Verse 69

YEUNG – When you repeatedly pronounce this word, observe what kind of upward flow happens in the throat; the pranic-Kundalini (Vaasi) would reach there in the same manner.

Kaya Siddhi – immortality in the physical dimension starts to manifest.

All these connotations imply the worship of Lord Natarajar is the very means of ingesting the ambrosia.



OTHER PORTRAYALS

Three portraits of Lord Siva are seen commonly picturised;
Lord Siva lying under the foot of a dancing Mother Kali;
Lord Siva seated alone-immersed Samadhi;
and Lord Siva as a Dancer accompanied by His consort Sivagami.

Since all Goddesses represent energy or movement - the dynamic aspect, Mother Kali dancing over Lord Siva represents the mundane aspect of the world.

When Siva is seen seated alone, immersed in Samadhi, it implies the energy aspect or the dynamics of objectifying consciousness has been withdrawn and merged back into Him.

And lastly, when Lord Siva is illustrated as a Dancer it carries the implication of 'Consciousness at Play'; the natural state of an enlightened one, ever abiding in eternal bliss. This bliss is attributed as the flow of nectar.





Ucchistha Vallabai Ganapathi

VINAYAKAR AGAVAL

By Woman Siddha Awwaiyar

*“The anklets, in your sandalwood cool,
Red lotus feet, sing many a music!
The golden chain around your waist,
The soft flower like cloth draped
Around your torso shines aglow.*

*Your treasure chest like stomach
And tusk so vast, and limitless
Your elephant face and vermilion adorned forehead
So easily perceived.*

*Five hands, the Goad, Noose and
Body so blue is heart rendering!
Your wide hanging trunk, four strong protruding shoulders
Three sacred eyes, three implanted trails,
Two big ears, the golden summit of bun hair
The entwined holy threads, three, upon
Your glowing chest!*

*You, The true wisdom of Turiya,
Beyond all words
You yield all wonders
As a wish fulfilling tree!
Oh! You who rides the Mouse,
Dines three fruits, I pray to You
‘Engulf me, as Yours!’*

*You manifested as Mother, showered
Your grace and severed the delusive
Nature of my Birth - this Illusion!
By the uniting of the pristine five Primal letters
You came and entered my heart!
Walking with Your Holy feet, this earth, in Guru’s Guise,
Showing the essence of Truth by ‘This’!*

*Gladly, You reveal the path of unfading life,
Your tusk as weapon, you remove and
End the vile fruits of Karma.*

*Poured in my ear un-cloying precepts,
You revealed to me the clarity of
Ever-fresh awareness!
Your sweet grace made me*

Master the senses - five!

*You proclaimed the way to still the organs of action,
Snapped my two - fold, dual karma and
Dispelled darkness, bestowing me,
A place throughout all four stages of Mukthi!*

*By grace, dissolving the delusion of
Triple impurities, showing me
A single Mantra, to shut
The five sense gates of nine door openings.
And the harmonious functioning of the chakras, Six;
You stood me firm and severed
All inner chattering!*

*You taught me the writ of Ida and Pingala
And showed me the end of Suzhi Munai, in the skull;
In the tongue of the rising serpent,
Came forth the force
Sustaining the triple bright realms
of Sun, Moon, and fire;
The unspoken Mantra - Ajapa
Entwined with Kundalini;*

*You explicitly uttered it, to impart
The skill of rising by life pulsation,
The raging flame of Mooladharam!*

*Revealed the secret of Immortality and
Taught me the nature of drinking Amritha,
The inner movements of Sun and the charming,
Moon - the friend of water lily.
Disclosing the wheel of moon and its 16 Kala stages,
And its relation with the inner sheaths of Body wheel,*

*Sweetly graced me to contemplate
The six faces of gross (chakras) and
Four faces of subtle (Antha Karanas)
Blessed the vision of subtle entwined body
And its eight facets, modes of being;
Showing the orifice of Brahmam and opened it!*

*Bestowing the miraculous powers and
Mukthi also by your sweet, grace.
Revealing Myself to me and Your grace
Swept away the accumulated Karma with its root;
Stilling my mind in Silence beyond speech and thought*

*Shining my mind by dipping me in ecstasy
And revealed, "Light and darkness share a common source"!*

*Boundless delight you have showered on me
Finished my, all afflictions, by the way of grace
Shown Sadasiva, at the core of Sound,
And Siva Lingam within the Heart.*

*Atom within Atom, vast beyond all vastness!
That stands like ripe sugarcane,
You made me realise the role of ash smearing
On the brows of your servitors, living in Truth,
And added me, one among them.*

*You made me experience, in my heart's core,
The inmost meaning of the Five letters.
Restoring my real nature and suffused me in Existence!*

*Oh! Master of Wisdom, Vinayakar,
Your feet alone are all my sole refuge!"*



TANTRA

Humans are drawn into their births by the pull of karmic effects.

Over and above these karmic effects, our perceptions and undertakings regarding the nature of life get further modified according to our current state of acquired conditioning. So without doubt, what we perceive as our reality is actually an illusion and what we mean by 'our personal world' is nothing more than a collage of our projected conditioning in thought forms, emotional patterns and manifested un-mindful actions.

In the AIDS chapter, we read about 'Megham'. As revealed by the Siddhas, Megham is a collection of disease-causing clouds that rain down diseases depleting the fundamental body tissues. This very view of the Siddhas reflects in all other dimensions of life too! They say, *'What you call your nature is nothing but a stale cloud of vibrations, of the sum total of all that has happened with/to you'.*

The wide spectrum of possibilities available in the Tantric path, serve to dissolve this staleness we hoard within. After these conditioning factors dissolve, the organising factor Samskara shows you your, Swabhava - the innate nature that supports to fulfil your life theme called Swadharma. And all actions done towards ones Swadharma are called 'Swa-Tantra'. In this way, Tantra offers us the opportunity to transcend our stagnated programming - the limitations. This process of transformation that aids in finding ones Swabhava and living according to it is 'Tantra'.

As already explained, stale programmed vibrations are ones karmic influences through which the recurring dreams/acts of life-drama occur. What you call as your actions are not really your conscious actions, nor can they be called an inner spontaneity. In truth, they are your conditioned responses in accordance to your conditioned level of energy within. And this is how even our life situations arise. Yes, our life situations get generated according to the resonance of our stagnated energy level! So, if you are met with a recurring situation in your life bringing the same nature of suffering again and again, it is actually a resonating response from your programmed energy patterns and we mourn it by saying, 'This is my karma, I have no relief'.

Is it that in moments such as these we forget that being met with a restraining situation repeatedly is actually life's way of saying something about our inner conditioning and teaching the lesson again and again just so you learn from it?

The Siddhas through their divine visions recognised all the possible different energy levels of human conditioning. They also realised a certain heightened energy state known to dissolve all such mediocre patterns. They saw every human has within him innate characteristics as a spark of divinity. It is in the depths of ones being. And they uncovered how this deep realm defies all linear logic and is where opportunities to recognise the existing potent pace accelerating one into his divine nature, resides. In other words, the Tantric path is formulated to actualise and unfold the residing divine nature and bring it to preside one's entire being. This 'potent pace' is ones inner gift, called Swabhava.

Based on this revelation the Siddhas devised Tantric Upasanas that dissolve our stagnant programmed conditioning or pseudo nature and push us to fall into our innate potent pace and get synchronised in the river flow of existence with ever-moving Life.

Primarily, the ferocious and wrathful Upasanas and wild rituals act as impeccable aids to help you get clear awareness of your present state of stagnant conditioning. Furthermore, these Upasanas serve as equally impeccable aids for de-conditioning these stagnant clouds. This is what is often termed as the nature of the Left Hand Path. Interestingly, after de-conditioning when the aspect of actualising ones Swabhava commences, in order to unleash ones inner potent pace of living, it is termed as the Right Hand Path.

In actuality, appearing as different colours of the journey, all these aspects are entwined and melting into one another only to meet the need of ones own nature of unfolding.

I was initiated into the ancient Tantric Upasana called Aswatha, where God is in the form of a fire-breathing Horse, symbolising the destruction of inertia; the Tamasic aspect of life, by its fire. As explained by my Teacher, every conditioning has a limited vibration and a language of its own. In this Upasana, life force is symbolised by a formation of letters indicating its working nature of a programmed manner. The vital factor in this Upasana is splitting the array of this programmed series of letters. Breaking the array of these letters (bijas) implies a break up in the programmed chain-reactions of life force.

After this, it comes to changing this array into a different one, to generate an entirely new and different energy level in oneself to produce the desired life-situations in the pace of ones life.

The Aswatha path of Tantra demands a long time Upasana of many levels to peel off the different layers of external life situations corresponding to different energy levels within.



There is a vast change in the Tantra yoga practiced in the ancient times and the practices followed under the new age banner today. The authenticity and the true understanding of the path, seems to have fallen to confusion, both, on the part of the available teachers as well as the new age practitioners.

But this is not to say the Tantric path fails to attract followers. On the contrary, recent times find the Tantric path holding quite an attraction, pulling several followers from all over the globe. But unfortunately, many Tantric teachings are being improperly imparted by present day teachers. What I find genuinely missing is the true understanding of the path itself which is what proves the teachings misleading and harmful. Due to its versatility, Tantra has always, until now, remained a secret cult.

A small example given below depicts the understanding of how the Tantric path differs from others.

Two ways can be used to bring a cow into the cowshed.

One is by beating it and pushing it forward into the shed.

The other is leading it by offering some grass and allowing it to willingly and naturally follow and enter into the shed.

The first approach exemplifies the Yogic approach and involves working on the human will by consciously adopting virtues like dispassion, austerity etc. or imbibing a life of holy disciplines etc.

The second approach clearly exemplifies the Tantric approach of how ones own passions, feelings and emotions are used and channelised into becoming the path to realizing Truth.

If the workings of Yoga are described to be on the Fire aspect of ones self, of burning the tendencies; then Tantra can be described as the path of Amritha, the cool nurturing aspect to Truth.

Tantra can be explained further. The Tantric system has two paths: one is the 'Left Hand' approach, called Vama Marga and the other is the 'Right Hand' approach, called Dakshina Marga.

In the earlier days, Tantric Masters would rarely disclose themselves. Instead they would carefully choose a few as disciples and their meetings would take place at remote unseen locations such as in the depths of a field, hidden areas, mountainous regions or sometimes even a bizarre place like a graveyard.

The cause for such secrecy was based on the whole and true definition of the Tantric Path! It is the path on which, '*wherever one has fallen, one must rise up and stand*'. This definition exemplifies that Tantra works on our wilder forces by influencing the human psyche. These wild knots of passion, agitation,

emotional constipation and emotional diarrhoea are united by the integrating approach of this sacred path.

To an orthodox and religious mind, this path would appear completely bizarre, whereas to a suppressed mind it would easily pose as a glittering excuse for indulgences. This is the prime reason why the Tantric path has been kept hidden from most and revealed only to those few having the appropriate mindset and needed disposition.

Once, my Tantric teacher said to me, *“if you have to follow Tantra you must neither have fear, disgust nor guilt.”* Think about how this would sound to a hippie or how it would sound to a puritan mind!

New age followers simply use Tantra as a realm for their cathartic approaches. Certain changes over time have led this system to be mal-practiced, leading not only to further perversion but a growing insensitivity towards oneself.

For instance, veiled by misconceptions the followers of the Left Hand approach tend to consider this path to be related to practices involving sexual activities. This mistaken belief acts as an attraction for people of improper indulging nature. To follow this path under this kind of an adverse understanding only leads to further perversion.

Here is a simple story elucidating the true and authentic working nature of the Tantric Path.

It is about a town wrestler who later became a Vaishnava Saint.

“In a township of the olden days there lived a wrestler who was very famous and popular amongst the people for his wrestling skills, his courage and strength. While he walked the streets of the town, people greeted him with great respect. One day a daasi (commercial sex workers of those days) was passing by on the street. She was young and enchantingly beautiful. The wrestler laid his eyes on her and was completely swept away by her beauty. He stood there with his eyes locked on her, captured, speechless and motionless. As she passed, he turned and without a single thought followed her. She didn’t notice him. She continued to walk and on reaching home went inside, completely unaware of the man following her. On reaching her house the wrestler stopped and remained seated outside the gate of her house. The next day the wrestler was already waiting outside her house when she emerged. He continued to follow her everywhere she went. He followed her unrelentingly. This continued day after day. He remained enthralled by her beauty and now his only activity was to follow her everywhere she went.

It was a small township and the popular wrestler’s strange and irrational activities didn’t go unnoticed. News and word soon spread

far and wide. Along with other things, the wrestler even relinquished his wrestling activities. They, who had earlier held him in great respect, now couldn't comprehend this uncommon behaviour and resorted to ridiculing him. But, the wrestler wasn't in the least affected by any of the adverse reactions coming from people around and remained deeply immersed in his feelings. Courageously he had dropped everything for the one thing that had captured his heart so overwhelmingly...

One day the sun shone strong and hard. When the daasi emerged from her house as usual the wrestler followed behind but this time he carried a palmyra umbrella to protect her from the scorching sun. Seeing this the town people began to openly scoff at him. But the wrestler still didn't notice the mocking people or their scornful laughter and remained devoted to following the daasi around. On this particular day, she walked to an old temple and entered. Inside the temple, it was completely dark. The wrestler too followed her into the temple. In pitch darkness the daasi lit a lamp. As light, from the lamp spread, it lit up the beautiful statue of Lord Krishna before the wrestlers eyes.

Something miraculous took place in this moment. The divine beauty of Lord Krishna captured the entire attention of the wrestler. The divine beauty of Lord Krishna exclusively captured the wrestler's attention, as never before. He stood there once again transfixed, eyes unmoving from the idol, immersed in the holiness and rapturous beauty that now shone before him.

Only a few moments before, just as he had been captivated and enthralled by the beauty of the daasi, transcending that he now stood enthralled by the divine Universal beauty emanating from Lord Krishna's idol before him.

Hereafter the wrestler went on to become a great Vaishnava Saint.

This age old story completely communicates the worthiness of a genuine attitude and imparts a true understanding of the Tantric path. It explains how the teachings are meant to bring transformation. The story also reveals how devotion to ones passion leads to the spontaneous dropping and the natural renunciation of other attachments (as the wrestler dropped his fame and position as a famous wrestler). Initially, the wrestler gave up worldliness for the daasi without fear of losing everything else, just for the one person or the one quality that had captured him. Later he went onto losing even the daasi but this time it was for Lord Krishna. How beautifully the wrestler is shown to transcend from a single clinging in to Universal Being.

It is clear how the dynamic working of the Tantric path takes ones gross passions and refines them by transforming them into the very sap of divinity.

For the wrestler, his passion for the daasi ultimately exploded as universal compassion.



A Tantric adores his passion, his emotions and every beauty he sees. He gains nourishment on seeing a flower neither by plucking it to possess it nor by crushing it in the name of adoration, but instead in cherishing and adoring the flower along with the beauty arising from it, as it is.

A tantric practitioner is taught to approach each moment with exclusivity.

For example: for one who is thirsty, the Tantric approach would be to refrain from drinking water immediately to quench the thirst and thereby avoid following a past habitual approach. At the same time, the purpose is not to insensitively suppress the thirst but to live in the thirst! And in this way gain a deeper understanding of the fabrication of the thirst.

In fact, the literal meaning of the word Tantra is 'web of fabrication'.

To sum it all, the Left Hand Tantric path is the adoration of one's passion without any suppression as well as without making cathartic approaches towards it.

So, what is the Tantric way? It is, to invoke an energy-awareness, which teaches one to open himself to inner forces while remaining aware of their pulsation. In this universally entwined web of energy, the Tantric path of energy-awareness is the link between the physical universe and its organising principles.

All Tantric practices have been premeditated to bring a shift and then a refined transformation from overt physical pleasure to internal joy. It is all done by remaining, focused and dedicated to the intrinsic flow of energy, just as an internal shift of focus happens when one experiences a sudden physical pain.

One of the first avenues the path advises to begin with is the human senses. The tantric practitioner is asked to build on the ability of his senses and grow in awareness of the varying welling-up movements and shifts happening within the energy spectrum in each present moment. This manner of keen sensitivity allows each energy movement to become an entire experience in itself. Significantly, in Tantric love making there is no goal for a sexual release or orgasm, instead the tantric way of lovemaking involves a total submission from each partner towards every movement of energy flow that demands our attention.

There is an emphasised need for attentiveness and focus to be vital, which brings us to an interesting and valid question - How to focus? But if we look

closely at the question itself, it reveals that the question itself poses in conflict to the path as it brings in a mental approach, which is entirely alien in this otherwise energetic flow.

You play and you learn. Sensitivity spontaneously arises while watching a tree, bird, river, witnessing and seeing the intrinsic intelligence embedded in each organism, in every moment. If you float on the dance of every emotion, every thought with sensitivity, in the world within, then that thought withers away and brings a flowering to the emotion. This flowering is kind of a spiritual mutation and grows to profound transformation. Abiding in such perceptive sensitivity or non-cerebral perception makes the mind exceedingly sensitive, pliable and creative, divulging a quantum energy potential that leads to quantum leap transformation.

Following the path of Tantra not only benefits personal relationships but also establishes a visionary understanding reflecting in all aspects of life.

Tantra says...

“To unfold is to discover, but to accumulate what one discovers is to cease to discover.”



RIGHT HAND PATH

The belief ‘God exists’ can be said to be as old as human existence. Over the years, some ‘Chosen Ones’ have perceived ‘IT’ and realized ‘IT’, going beyond the cycles of birth and death and attained Moksha, then remained immersed in eternal bliss and tasted the Nectar of Immortality.

As long as man is bound by his human limitations, he cannot but worship God through human forms. He worships God in forms of human symbols. Therefore, we look on God as the ideal father, the ideal mother, the ideal husband, the ideal son or the ideal friend. But all these many names ultimately lead us all to the Nameless, all the various forms, to the Formless, all words to Silence and all emotions to a serene flowering of a peaceful Existence – Knowledge – Bliss, - the Absolute. The Gods merge in ONE Godhood.

Man uses symbols, images, and performs rites. He worships and invokes the supreme spirit through these images. The images no longer remain as clay or stones, but become embodiments of The Spirit identifying with life and consciousness. The Gnani realises Transcendental Reality and the absurdity of material articles, rituals and rites. But it is only through these that the ardent devotee aspires to realize God as all-pervading consciousness.

The second path in the Tantra system is the Right Hand approach. This path involves Upasana and worship of a prescribed personal deity by way of

specific Mantras, Yantras etc. In ancient times the practice of the Right Hand approach was prescribed to an aspirant by the Guru with a specific Upasana of a prescribed personal deity. The Guru would carefully prescribe a specific Upasana after recognising a certain and specific inherent character (swabhava) of the person. This divine and accurate recognition aids the sadhaka to attain a personal bond and relationship with the specified deity, who grants him blessings and becomes his guiding light to Truth.

*“The Divine Mother’s Magic
is ancient all life itself.
She existed before Gods and mortals
and she will still exist even after the great dissolution.
Mother is pure energy in subtle form,
but in times of need
or just out of desire to play, she manifests.”*

Nowadays, I find several followers involved in sacred practices of the Right Hand approach, worshipping not one but *many* deities. This way not only fails but can also create adverse effects in their lives. Even the teachers seen nowadays, prescribe Upasana in an extremely general or collective fashion. They shockingly miss out the most essential requirement of gaining an in-depth understanding of which deity the aspirant’s inherent character resonates with. Only The Sat Guru has such a vastness; only He holds a penetrative vision of ones inherent character and the qualities in total. This is shown in the short story below.

“In ancient India several boys were learning in a Guru Kula, receiving guidance from their Guru to prepare them to fulfil their life purpose. The learning attained in a Guru Kula is vastly different from the schooling we know today. The boys would be made to do several seemingly ordinary activities but their performance indirectly revealed to the wise Guru their inherent natures, natural inclinations and innate potentials.

One day one of the boys took the cows out to graze in the meadows nearby. A few boys from a nearby village came rushing over to him and beat him up. Crying, injured and sad, he returned to the Guru Kula.

On reaching, he was first met by one of his companions who, on seeing him hurt and bleeding, felt a rage of anger rising up within him. On questioning the beaten boy, he found out which boys were responsible for the dismal condition of his friend. Unable to tolerate this injustice he set of to fight with them.

Another companion, seeing his friend so badly hurt approached him filled with concern and spontaneously tried to soothe his wounds by

helping him clean them and then treating them with some healing herbs.

Finally, a third boy met the injured boy and he too enquired what had happened. Silently, he listened to the whole incident without interruption. All he calmly said to the boy was not to worry, as God would take care of him.

Seeing the three different responses of the three boys, the Guru of the Guru Kula recognised the first boy who displayed a character of inherent bravery and courage to fight against the injustice inflicted on his companion, to be a suitable disciple for martial arts.

The second boy, who showed an inherent character of spontaneous compassion by trying to heal and soothe the pain of his companion, the Guru recognised him to be a suitable disciple for becoming a great and compassionate healer.

The third boy, who responded with calm, having the inherent character of surrender to God, was recognised to be the suitable one for leading a life in the path of spirituality right from this young age itself.”

Through this story we are lead to question: what is ones inherent character or Swabhava and precisely what role does it play in our life?

Swabhava is the inherent character of an individual and is determined by a combination of his past birth merits, his fulfilments as well as shortcomings. This combination or swabhava, takes birth along with the individual and urges him to lead his life in a particular way. This particular way is called Swa-dharma. It is his mission in life. But, just living according to our swabhava is not verily enough. Only if it is overseen by a constructive approach can it lead to a meaningful life and authentic living. From this much we can clearly comprehend that although all of humanity has one and the same ultimate purpose of realizing Truth and yet each one of us walk a different walk; it is by being born as per our individual Swa-dharma in accordance to our Swabhava.

The Right Hand path scripted by the ancient Tantric Masters divulges appropriate Upasana practices to be offered to different deities. Most importantly, They have contoured each mode of worship or Upasana to correspond to the various inherent characteristics present in humans.



UPASANA

Literally, the word Upasana means Upa asana - close to ones grounding.

We have already discussed the significance of grounding in earlier chapters and so I will get straight to the point. Grounding within ones self happens in

two ways. It either happens when one directly plunges into an inward journey, as a Yogi would do; or when one gains an external grounding and the by-product of which, results as his inner grounding.

Upasana is the path of coming close to ones grounding by way of what one naturally loves. Each and every one of us have a personal deity to whom we feel intrinsically inclined towards, just as we have preferences of other kinds. This inherent inclination is born not out of something acquired along the way but from a comparatively untouched ground. Each deity expounds the refined embodiment of our own energy patterns of all levels. This is why we can feel a natural resonance with a particular deity. A personal deity is an embodied aspect of the primal energetic patterns that predominantly influence our own psyche. Our personal deity is the exact replica of the primal pattern that manipulates all the secondary factors of the psyche. This primal pattern is called 'Samskara'. Samskara too has its individualistic nature coming from past births, over and above that it also carries the influence of 'our collective' day-to-day life. So, Samskara is both individualistic as well as collective. Samskara can be called as a parallel to the word archetype.

('Sams' means - well, 'kaara' means – making or creating. Collectively, it means – *'Making something refined or well'*).

The Samskara predominantly relevant to a particular individual should be re-lived by him consciously without any part left unseen or out of his awareness. Through Upasana, the Tantric practitioner first recognises and then unwinds his swabhava and inherent possibilities into a greater pattern of creative awareness. In this way, a Tantric makes his life mission shine in its fullest dimension, which is known as his Swadharma.

Upasana involves mystical rituals, mantras, Yantras, esoteric processes etc., leading into a loving union to evoke this primordial pattern for conscious living. This sort of a journey introduces the practitioner to a different sense of time and space and he inhabits this through his relationship with his personal deity. By such, worship the fragments of ones inner psyche and all the conflicts of ones life experiences come together and flower into a living whole. A Tantric practitioner's personal deity comes to life in every aspect of his living and he finds a living orientation to relate with existence. This personal deity is none other than one's primordial companion; a connection to his unified whole, that guides and consciously co-creates the course of his life.

As we know, an archetype is a particular pattern of energy constructing the shape of the psyche of an individual. It can be experienced only through ones own personal deity, as it cannot be experienced directly. Gods, deities, demons etc., are all primordial archetypal energies. The mystical stories and myths are stories of these primordial, collective, unconscious realms. They reveal how these forces materialised themselves in the physical domain, as Samskaras are intangible and cannot be localised in their own inherent

state. But they can be localised externally, in the forms of deities or can even be seen in collective characteristically behavioural patterns. The Indian mythologist, unlike a western psychiatrist, approaches this constructively and positively, ascribing it a name - Swabhava and Swadharma.

Consciously reliving the primal forces of our own psyche with courage, tolerance and fortitude and by coming to know them deeply, we can grow to a new level of harmony and empowerment. The journey of conscious reliving is what Upasana is.

It is the adventurous journey of seeing oneself standing amidst a mirrored room! These mirrors reflect all the different and hidden aspects of your self; ones which you are ordinarily not conscious of. An individual with not enough grounding in himself, making this sort of journey would either get stuck or may even turn crazy on being confronted by his hidden aspects.

It is because when one encounters and relives his patterns and thereby actualises them, in this realm a different sense of time is experienced. Mainly because the deities embodied in archetypal energies manifest at transitional realms - between the conscious and unconscious, sleep and wake or different kind of physical spaces, called power spots. The twilight times of dawn, dusk, and the transitional shifting time zones during midday and midnight are considered as the vital moments in Upasana practices. Even in Hindu temples the vital pooja and worships are done during these hours.

After one deepens in his Upasana, he sees the world, simultaneously in both, its mundane physical aspect and its prime mover aspect as archetypal patterns, the realm of Samskara.



TANTRIC GODDESSES



CHINNAMASTA



THRIPURA SUNDARI



MATHANGI



VARAHI

UPAASAK AND HIS DEVATA

There are Upasanas for many deities and they must be performed based on the inherent character of an individual. We have explained below a few of them just to help the reader recognise how compatibility and resonance is felt with a personal deity and how those attributes will express characteristics of the person.

There are two kinds of Upasana worshippers or practitioners. One category has those individuals whose inherent character or swabhava naturally carries a majority of the predominant traits of a certain deity, in which case the resonance and inclination is evident, effortless and natural.

And the other category has those individuals who are not necessarily of the particular nature of a deity and nor do they carry any of the relevant traits and characteristics. In which case, to worship a deity they would have to undertake and imbibe by discipline all the characteristics the deity flourishes by.

Goddess Saraswathi

An ideal worshipper for undertaking the Upasana or worship of Goddess Saraswathi, as his personal deity, would naturally be born with the swabhava of a clear discriminative intelligence and natural inclination towards reading scriptures. Moreover, for him individual insights and revelations would occur with ease.

When the attributes and qualities of Goddess Saraswathi are compatible and share a natural resonance with this sort of an individual's swabhava, performing the Upasana of Goddess Saraswathi would undoubtedly lead him to the Ultimate Truth through Her blessings and guidance.

But, in case the person's character doesn't inherently display such virtues and if the person has had to adopt the Upasana of Goddess Saraswathi, these virtues are to be adopted as a discipline in the internship of the Upasana.

Lord Anjaneya

For undertaking the Upasana of Lord Anjaneya, the person should be celibate and inherently of valorous character. In case the person's character doesn't display such virtues inherently and if the person has adopted the Upasana of Lord Anjaneya, these virtues are to be adopted as a discipline in the internship of the Upasana.

Goddess Kali

For the Mother Goddess Kali, an individual is required to have an innate attitude of dispassion and renunciation since the very significance of the form of Goddess Kali is the destroyer of evils, attachments, sluggishness and other

Tamasic characteristics. This Upasana would not fruitify blessings for worldly and materialistic enjoyments.

Kali – The Goddess of Power

She has been conceived, worshipped and realized by the human mind in various forms. Kali the terrific Goddess of Tantra; Kali the pivot; the sovereign mistress; “Kali the Prakrithi, the procreative nature; the destroyer, the creator - is greater and deeper to those who have eyes to see, She is the universal Mother, the visible God who leads the elected to the invisible reality. If She pleases, She can take away every last trace of ego from the created being and merge him into the consciousness of the Absolute or the undifferentiated God, through Her boundless grace... The trembling and finite ego loses itself in the illimitable freedom – the Absolute!

Tantra describes Goddess Kali as the first of the ten aspects of Sakthi, the Goddess of Time who destroys everything. At the time when the Celestials got overpowered by the Asuras or demons called Sumbha and Nisumbha, they had run to the Himalayas and take refuge at the feet of Goddess Parvathi, the eternal consort of Lord Siva. In response to their prayers the beautiful luminous Goddess Parvathi chose to overpower those Asuric forces, for which She emerged the Goddess Durga, the remover of suffering from her very own holy cells.

To destroy the Generals, of the demons Sumbha and Nisumbha, ‘Kali’, the fierce black goddess emerged from the forehead of the world bewitching beauty of Goddess Durga and beheaded Chanda and Munda. Thus Goddess ‘Kali’ earned the name ‘Chamunda Devi’.

Rakta Bija, the fierce demonic general of Sumbha and Nisumbha had a mysterious power to multiply himself through the drops of his spilt blood in the battlefield. Goddess Kali was asked by Goddess Durga to spread her extensive tongue, drink away all the blood gushing out of Rakta Bija, and prevent the emergence of any more demons, enabling Goddess Durga to exterminate him.

As we know, there are already many forces at play within us at all times. As we are not well grounded, we are vulnerable to everything. In other words, we are victims of many invaders, from our inability to discriminate between that and ourselves which has invaded us.

Let us understand what the Asuras or demons symbolically represent within us. They are symbolic of the various aspects of egoism in every individual.

The demon Chanda symbolises the negative aspect of subconscious tendencies of violence and the urge to cause harm.

The demon Munda symbolises the negative aspect of subconscious tendencies of a provoking nature. This instigates all kinds of troubles and brings a withering off and eating away of any kind of prevailing harmony.

The demon Rakta Bija symbolises the negative aspect of our subconscious tendencies such as killing, terrorism, mass murder etc. We can see the play of this Asuric force happening vitally in society nowadays. There has been a swell of terrorism and a widespread multiplication of similar kinds of destruction happening in the name religion, race, capitalism and power etc.

The demon Sumbha symbolises persistent inertia and laziness that everybody succumbs to. One and all may be familiar with this aspect at minimalist levels. But if it is taking control of yourself and sweeping away all the livingness and spirit of life, it is definitely hampering the flow of creativity within you as well as at a mass consciousness level. In other words, this force curbs ones evolution at an individual level, and at a collective level suppresses the development of society.

The demon Nisumbha symbolises ignorance, the illusory nature of egoism that really veils oneself from ones true nature.

Kali comes from the word 'Kala', or Time; She is the power of time. Time as we are all well aware, is all destroying.

Since She is the supreme energy responsible for the dissolution of the created universe, Her form as depicted, strides awe and fear. But She is the created and the Mother too; She is ever engaged in protecting Her children. When pleased She can remedy all diseases, but if displeased She can destroy all that we love and like to possess.

She is always reassuring Her fear-stricken children through the Abhaya Mudra, saying, 'Don't be afraid! I am your own dear Mother!' She is also exhibiting Her wish to grant boons through the Varada Mudra. The Absolute is beyond all name, form, attributes and activities, which is why Siva is shown lying prostrate like a Sava or corpse, under Her feet. Kali represents His Sakthi or energy. The energy however can never exist apart from its Source. It can manifest itself and act only when it is based firmly in the Source. This is what Kali standing over the chest of Siva means.

One should not jump to conclusions of Kali representing only the destructive aspects of God's power. What exists when time is transcended is the eternal night of limitless peace and joy. This is also Kali (Maharatre). She prods Mahadeva again into the next cycle of creation. In short, She is the power of God in all His aspects.

She is the cosmic power, the totality of the Universe, a glorious harmony of the pairs of opposites. She creates, preserves and She destroys the limited ego, offering it to Her consort Siva.

As Her children we be blessed! Peace and Happiness! A prayer to Her, "Mother, make us men. Mother! Destroy all negative tendencies hidden within us."



Goddess Kali

Goddess Matangi

For Goddess Matangi, a practitioner of a creative and expressive character highly inclined towards music, as a form of expression is needed. By undertaking this Upasana, the individual could attain the Siddhi of oratory skills and music. The famous Goddess Meenakshi Temple of Madurai is also considered as the Temple of Goddess Matangi. She guides you to the inner ever-ongoing music using the path of devotional music, as music is the only language of the Self. Goddess Matangi is the inspirer and carries in Her arms many of the wandering Saints spreading wisdom through their simple songs.

A Goddess Matangi Upasana practitioner would find music in every element of the earth and inspired by each element he would become an expression of the music of Nature.

Lord Bhairava

An individual who is a fearless and not easily horrified by the hurdles thrown into ones life could naturally undertake the Upasana of Lord Bhairava. He would need the inherent ability of overcoming horrifying obstacles with ease. This trait is needed because the internship of this Upasana adopts a strange method to shift ones consciousness by way of shock. This is the very method by which the sadhaka would be led to realizing Truth.

Goddess Varahi

Goddess Varahi is referred to as Pantri Thalaichi (Boar faced goddess), in many of the ancient Tamil works. Three different aspects of worship of the Goddess Varahi were prevalent. One aspect was during the Vedic period. The second aspect worshipped Goddess Varahi as one amongst the seven virgin goddesses. And the third aspect finds Goddess Varahi as the consort of Lord Varaha Murthi, one of ten avataars of Lord Vishnu.

The first aspect of Goddess Varahi is highly praised in the Vedas, especially the Atharvana Veda and the entire of Mantra Sastra is based on Her worship.

The second aspect flourishes in the form of popular worship as the village deity by simple villagers. Left-hand practitioners also follow it as Upasana.

The third aspect worships Goddess Varahi as one of the presiding goddesses in the Sri Chakra Yantra. Right-hand practitioners pursue this.

This boar-faced goddess is known to have four subordinates called

Swapnesi,
Thirasgru,
Giripadha Devi
and Unmaddha Bairavi.

The function of Swapnesi is to make others suffer from bad dreams, insomnia and panic. Giripadha devi makes enemies flee or chases them from one place to another. The function of Unmaddha Bairavi is to make the enemies turn mad. And Thirasgru makes the enemy functionless or paralysed.

As an example of the kind of practices involved in this worship, the left-hand theme worships Goddess Varahi during the hours of the night, on the fifth day after the new moon. Items like the milk and the excreta of a buffalo, a red carpet, chick peas etc are commonly used for this ceremony. During the Upasana evil elements like ghosts etc intensely wish to join in the invocation, which is why the Tantric performs 'Thick Bandhana' as one of the procedures to bind the eight directions. It is commonly seen how Goddess Varahi's worship attracts ghosts as they won't allow their destroyer to appear here.

Fulfilment in this Upasana depends on the practitioner's courageous heart and persistent effort. His fears and conditioning of death are both destroyed by the divine Darshan of Goddess Varahi in Her Upasana.

Goddess Varahi (Boar goddess) presents herself as an extremely powerful and wrathful Goddess. This Upasana could grant the sadhaka many Siddhis. Although, the blessings of the Upasana seem appealing and dreamlike, the Goddess has not made the Upasana easy at all. Moreover, some adverse effects are also easy in the offing since the Boar signifies digging deep into the earth. This demands tremendous stability and grounding in character from the aspiring sadhaka. An extremely specific attitude is required for performing the Upasana to this Goddess.

During the Medieval period, in Tamil Nadu there was a General by the name of Sunderesha Sarma in the Chola Kingdom, who had faced many battles. He was very successful and victorious in his general-ship. He found great beauty in his service and in the adventures of the battlefield. In later years, after his retirement from general-ship, he took up the Upasana of Goddess Varahi, had Her darshan and attained blessings. We can find his Samadhi shrine in a village called Veerasolan around 60 kilometres from Madurai. He wrote beautiful verses adoring Her features and magnanimity in the work called Varahi Malai, (garland of the Goddess Varahi). This work also carries verses of the Mantra and Yantra for Her Upasana but their application (which is the Tantra) remains hidden. Obviously, the works of Varahi Tantra is unavailable anywhere in India. There are 32 types of Occult applications in Varahi worship under the base of Asta Karma.

A character of strength, courage, stability and love for this form of adventure and battle is demanded from a practitioner. On fulfilling the Upasana of Goddess Varahi She graces the practitioner with the mastery over the 5 elements along with the Siddhi of Gnana.

*Behold the Sakthi as Chakra calmly,
On the days meditating thus, Felicity be,
Then your name and fame is equal to Brahma,
From here you conjoin Siva.*

Thirumanthiram Verse 1367

As we cannot indulge in lengthy explanations of all the Upasana's we end by speaking of an Upasana most known, popular and common to all spiritual schools, the Sri Chakra Upasana.

In the Siddha cult, the Sri Chakra Yantra is composed of 43 triangles. This divine Mandala comprises of intersections of downward and upward pointing triangles, symbolising each phenomena within existence. The Sri Chakra is considered as the Master of Yantras, as all the Goddesses are found presiding within the Sri Chakra with the top centre presided over by Goddess Lalitha Thripura Sundari. The Sri Chakra Yantra is significant of the Creation, Sustenance and Destruction of the Cosmos.

One may have heard in ancient mythology, the sky symbolises the masculine nature while the earth the feminine. Similarly, the five downward pointing triangles of the Sri Chakra Yantra are known to be the Sakthi Yantras. And the three upward pointing ones including the Bindu are ascribed as the Siva Yantras. So, as a whole, the Sri Chakra Yantra can be described as the '*divine matrix of the union of Siva-Sakthi*.'

The nine outer circles seen in this Yantra are called the Nava-Avarnas and represent the veiling aspect or the conditioning aspects of human consciousness. These aspects of conditioning need to be unveiled before the inner realms of this divine matrix are touched upon.

There are two themes in the Sri Chakra Upasana followed in the Siddha Tantric dimension. The Mother Goddess Lalitha, seated in the MahaMeru as the presiding sovereignty of the Universe is one theme. Here She stands as the ruling Ultimate, The One performing the 'Panch Kritiya', - Creation, Sustenance, Destruction, Veiling and Blessing.

And in the second theme, the Bindu, the Centre, is known as the doorway of 'Chidambaram' - the space of consciousness, where Lord Siva is ever-dancing.

*"The state of forty-three triangles, indescribable;
The triangles pointing towards the Head in the centre,
If you orient there, it is the best of all service that you can
heartfully do.
O Snake! Dance, saying this."*

Pampatti Siddhar Verses

On the divine union of Siva Sakthi, manifests Lord Natarajar - dancing in the space of consciousness.

For this Upasana a tantric practitioner fundamentally needs to know the Anga Niyasa and Kara Niyasa procedures to invoke the Satvic divine nature in himself as well as to awaken the Deities within his Nadis. After the practitioner undertakes methods of purification, he can move onto worshipping the various other deities circling and guarding the Goddess Lalitha.

The great Chandra Sekara Swami, mentions, *“The Sri Chakra is not different from Goddess Sri Vidya. One must not treat it as a mere Yantra, but as the very body of the Goddess Herself.”*

This could be the missing link for most sadhaka's who might be approaching the Upasana in a mere practice oriented attitude and treating it as a mere Yantra. As for being attuned with this worship, one won't feel attuned to this worship through technical knowledge or by employing a practice-oriented mind.

A worshipper and Sadhaka, both, at the least would need an optimistic character, adoration for prosperity, auspiciousness, purity and fertility. One who has found blessings through this Upasana wouldn't encounter any form of deficiency, poverty, lack, pessimism or such in his own, life. Nor would these aspects inflict themselves in his surroundings. A life filled with auspiciousness and wisdom would flourish, as this Upasana grants both material prosperity and Gnana. This Upasana can be undertaken solely by the grace of the Guru since it is the highest amongst all Upasana's.

In the works and verses of the Siddha System, the Sri Chakra is mentioned as 'Narpattu Mukkonam', which means - the worship of 43 triangles. Many verses depict how prized the Siddhas considered this form of Upasana.

Siddha Sattai Muni Sings in His Gnanam-4

Listen the method of Pooja

Some do pooja for manuscripts with mudra

Some do pooja of lamp

Some do pooja keeping woman

Some do pooja regularly on chakras

The pooja, I do, is Meru

Recite the forty-three triangles

Keeping this, did poojas, the Siddhas

- Verse 1

They, who do pooja of Meru, the self-illuminates

If they curse, the universe be burnt

The honey like Meru needs Deeksa (initiation)

Don't approach it as a kid

They who did Meru-pooja

If they do teaching (upadesha) opening their mouth

The Siddhis of alchemy, aerial fly

Can be attained (looted) by his disciple

- Verse 2

Listen the three letters (syllables) of Valai

After doing pooja of it skilfully

Then listen the eight letters of Tripurai

After passing it by doing pooja

Listen the letters of on coming (succeeding) pooja of Buvanai

Skilfully perform Buvani-pooja

Get oriented to the six letters of Yamala by listening it

Do Pooja by praising Her feet

Listen the five letters of Yamala after it,

After finishing the fivefold initiations

- Verse 3

As a prelude for the fire like Vaasi yoga,

Oh Son- do the inner pranayama within,

If you know and have insights all of these,

Then no obstacles for Kaya- Siddhi."



What is distinguishable in Tantric Siddha teachings is the hidden Tantric worship of 5 Goddess; starting with Goddess Valai, moving onto Goddess Bhuvaneshwari (Bhuvanai), then Goddess Thiripura Sundari (Thiripura) and next Goddess Shyamala (Shyamalai) and finally Goddess Manonmani.

When a disciple, under the guidance of the Guru, practices this Upasana, Goddess Valai appears to him as a young girl of five or six years of age and engages with the sadhaka in playing. This is how She teaches Her disciple, whom She has come to bless. As the journey continues, She matures and Her appearance, name as well as Her teachings undergo change accordingly. The worship of Goddess Valai is a vital stage in the Siddha Tantric System for without Her blessings one cannot attain Siddhahood. All the ancient Siddhas have spoken of this in a highly secretive nature.

Another manner of worship of Goddess Valai has nine forms of Goddess Valai in it, with their appropriate names and holds blessings for different attributes.

Goddess Kumari (2 years of age) -

Her blessings destroy and burn away Karmic poverty.

Goddess Thirumurti (3 years of age) -

Her blessings grant Wealth and prosperity.

Goddess Kalyani (4 years of age) -

Her blessings destroy enmity and remove hostility.

Goddess Rohini (5 years of age) -

Her blessings grant furthering in academics and learning.

Goddess Kalika (6 years of age) -

Her blessings free one of agony, pain and trauma.

Goddess Chandika (7 years of age) -

Her blessings break black magic spells and give protection.

Goddess Sambhavi (8 years of age) -

Her blessings bring auspiciousness in the course of ones life, give pleasantness, and joy in the events in life.

Goddess Durgai (9 years of age) -

Her blessings remove fear, phobia and paranoia.

Goddess Subhadra (10 years of age) -

Her blessings grant all kinds of auspiciousness, abundance, affluences and contentment.



In some shrines found in Tamil Nadu the Goddess aspect is depicted as a Tapasvini. These shrines are frequented by those followers of Tantric Upasana who seek Her blessings during the internship of their Upasana.

GODDESS

PLACES IN TAMILNADU

1. Kumari	Kanya Kumari
2. Tapas Kamatchi	Maangadu
3. Agilandeswari	Tiru Anaikaval (Trichy)
4. Gomathi	Sangaran Kovil
5. Kamalambikai	Tiruvarur, Kamala peeth
6. Parasakthi	Kuttralam, Yoga Peeth
7. Nitya Kalyani	Tiru Tala Turai (Ial Kudi)
8. Arum Tapa Nayaki	Balluvoor
9. Yogambika	Tiru Perum Turai
10 Karapagambika	Maylapur



OCCULT

*“We must not regard wonders and signs
As contrary to Nature but contrary to
What, is known of Nature.”*

St.Augustine -deciv.dei.bk xxi, Ch.VIII

Life is a play of unseen hidden forces. We live and move in a world of these forces but are almost totally unaware of them, their impact, or their potential and strength.

The strength of these forces can be derived or harnessed from either external things or from our own being. For example, strength for fighting an illness can come from external medicines or diet, or it can even be summoned from within the body's innate healing intelligence and intrinsic ability. In today's day the development of the strength residing within lacks proper attention and so not only does it lag behind but has also deteriorated. Most often, we try to cure diseases by external or visible means; namely more powerful drugs and advanced technology. This has brought an increase in newer diseases in relation to the body's own immune system, which is what highlights the deterioration in the body's natural mechanism of healing.

In the present stage of human evolution, our difficulty in discovering or comprehending the subtle forces of life is due to the restricting nature of our normal or ordinary limited consciousness. When this consciousness develops and becomes subtler will it come in a more direct contact with the inner reality of things and gain an awareness of the working nature of unseen forces. Such an inward and direct knowledge of things *is* the very basis of Siddha Tantric Science.

*“Thannai ariya thanakkoru kedu illai
Thannai ariyamal thane kedukinran”*

*“Know thyself and this makes you free from all evil,
But man, un-knowing of himself, is a victim.”*

This is the basic dictum propounded by Siddha Thirumoolar in the science of Life.



ASTA KARMAM - THE EIGHT KINDS OF OCCULT APPLICATIONS

The literal meaning of the words Asta Karma - Asta means eight, Karma means performance.

The ancient Siddhas discovered the occult Truth to be within the very functions of Nature and between the constructs of life.

From an entire Ocean only some water *separates* itself from it; rising as vapour *evaporates* into the call of the Sun and forms clouds in the sky. The clouds then *come together* in cloud formations. From these the 'whole' ones fall; *separating* from the sky, drawn by the attraction of the earth, as rain.

For the cloud that burst into rain and fell to the attraction of the earth, it was its *death* in the sky, but its *birth* on earth!

OR

A predator exudes an *enchanted* presence to *transfix* his prey and render it immobile.

As we can see, simple, day-to-day processes of Nature have implications of being built of different stages, but not an endless number. As per Their visions, the Siddhas stated the number of these stages to be eight and have revealed a simple and straightforward explanation to the series phenomena created by the repetition or combination of these eight kinds. On realising the occult flourishing within the functions of Nature, the ancient Siddhas classified the eight occult aspects or performances, within Prakrithi (Nature) and named them along with the description of their working nature as given below.

The sacred verses in the texts of the Siddhas describe these forces and their nature of working to be intangible, elusive and subtle and therefore a deity represents each aspect with its attributes. These forces can be harnessed by worshipping these deities for an intended purpose. In other words, the form and worship of the relevant deities is what enables one to relate to the otherwise intangible world of occult and help enter into a relationship, which unfolds and articulates the nature of subtler forces. This communion and interaction through worship is how the subtle world is brought to light, expressed and actualised.

The example of the Ocean and the Predator given above clearly elucidate the underlying natural occultism prevalent in day-to-day existence.

Sthambana restraining, transfix or immobile

Different natures of restraining... such as rendering the enemies powerless, stopping, checking or restraining the powers of fire; the flowing of water; the ferocity of wild beasts; making an evil person or spirit stand immovable in one place etc.

Mohana - Gives the power of overwhelming seduction, enchantment

Ucchatana	- Confers the powers to exorcize Power of expulsion; Setting demons against a person to ruin him by magical incantations; dislodging them by proper procedures; dislodging demons from persons or places.
Marana	- Deprivation of life Renders destruction and death of enemies, by killing either evil spirits or evil human beings.
Vasiya	- Confers the powers of bringing a person under one's influence. Confers fascination and attraction towards one.
Akarshana	- Confers the power of placing men and things under ones will and desire. Used for summoning or invoking a spirit or absent person visibly into one's presence.
Vidvedanam	Triggering hatred towards something.
Bhedanam	- Causing Dissension, discord etc.

Actually, each of these eight classified karmas has eight sub-karmas or functions according to their applications; such as earth, friend, enemy, animal and world...

Therefore, there are totally sixty-four Asta karmas, but fifty-six of them fall under the first eight karmas.



BOX OF DIRECTION

KINDS OF ASTA KARMA

DIRECTION

Akarsanam and Vasiyam

East

ThamBanam and Mohanam

North

Vidveshnam and Utchadanam

West

Mysterious herbs having occult nature used in Tantric Practices

Akarsanam

Acalypha

Gynandropsis pentaphylla

Calotropis gigantea

Utchadanam	Heliotropium indicum Crotalaria laburnifolia Lawsonia inermis
Tambanam	Spermacoce hispida Indigofera tinctoria Hygrophila auriculata
Vidvedanam	Aristolochia bracteata Phyllanthus amarus Euphorbia tirucalli
Vasiyam	Achyranthes aspera Desmodium gyrans/ eodariocalyx-motorius Rhinacanthus naustus
Mohanam	Cyperus Rotundus Curculigo orchioides Hemidesmus indicus
Maranam	Plumbago Zeylancia Gloriosa superba Euphorbia hirta
Bedanam	Tinospora cordifolia Abutilon indicum Crateva Magna

The ancient Siddhas' working knowledge of unseen forces gave birth to an entire Science called Occultism. They devised methods, practices, rituals etc. to serve not only worldly success but spiritual intentions also. The application of Occult practices involves Chakras, Yantras (mystical diagrams), Mantras, Dithi (a specific astrological time), specific herbs, particular beads, different kinds of Seats for performing the worships, specific directions, particular elements and esoteric breathing applications.

The following instance shows how six of the eight occult aspects have been combined and applied for a spiritual purpose.

For instance, in Esoteric-breathing practices...

Vasiya is calling forth the Prana from Air.

Mohana is involved in the process of settling the separated Prana into a specific Chakra.

Tambana is retaining the Prana in that specific Chakra or Nadi.

Bedana is separating the unwanted Apana from the Pranic current.

Vidveshana is chasing the contaminated Prana or unwanted Apana.

Marana is eliminating the chased unwanted Apana through the bodily outlets such as exhalation, expiration etc.

The Siddhas warn us through Their poems to refrain from learning and applying this warrior sorcery art for selfish purposes. They have urged us to use it for constructive means and the wellbeing of others. One must beware of the unwanted karmas of doing selfish activities, as it returns, pointing the sorcerer against the bull's eye.

Coming back to the applicatory aspect of this precarious and potent science, the first pooja performed before starting any ritual is the 'Ganapathi pooja'. Ganapathi pooja or the worship of Lord Vinayaka, is done to evoke the eight occult Siddhis. According to Siddha Tantra, this Asta Ganapathi pooja should be performed first, with a Yantra, the appropriate Mantra and other Tantric procedures. After this, one can enter into Asta karma practices one by one. This is a highly esoteric art of ancient Siddha Tantra to be used only for multifarious constructive purposes.

Ritualistic or performed occultism has been described above, but on a final note, I would like to add that a Siddha Gnani or Gnana Chittar never wilfully performs any Siddhis. It is by His very presence that all Siddhis emerge. It is an uninterrupted flow of Divine automation, which performs the needed phenomena through its Primal Intelligence and not a trace of acquisition or human intention stains this purity and divinity.



CHAKRAMS

(Yantras)

The word Yantra is derived from the root word 'Yam', which means to sustain, hold or govern. The Yantras are called Chakrams in the Tamil language. A Chakram is a concentrated field of consciousness that pulls together and controls different types of energies.

Generally, Chakrams comprise of some sacred Tamil seed syllables, numbers, a point, triangle, or circle, or square, lotus; all of which carry a symbolic significance.

- Of these, the Bindu is represented by the dot in the centre. This is the point at which the kinetic energy radiates, reaching the outer circumference before subsiding into the nucleus again. It is the unitary state of Siva and Sakthi.
- A Triangle is symbolic of the creative energy.

- Moola - Trikona - the three lines of a triangle constitute the root matrix of Nature.
- An Upward Triangle - A triangle with its apex pointing upwards represents the Siva aspect.
- A Downward Triangle - A triangle with its apex pointing downwards represents the Sakthi aspect.
- A Circle - Represents the cyclic and rhythmic contraction and expansion of Cosmic Energy.
- A Square - The Four corners of a square denote the four directions and thereby the totality of space. A square often appears as the base of many Chakrams.
- Broken walls (of a Fort) - This shape is always drawn on the outermost layer signifying the Guardian Deities of eight directions.
- Bija Mantras – They represent the visual and auditory forms of a particular Tattwa, deity or any other quantum vibration of divine energy contained in the Chakram.

Each Chakram is ascribed to a specific deity and includes the relevant mantras. As Chakrams by themselves are not functional, their living vibrations are attributed to the specific Mantras and the particularity of applications, such as proper pronunciation, auspicious time etc, combined with certain procedures, which make them effective.

This whole procedure is also called Tantra in esoteric practices. A special ritual is performed to invigorate and enliven the Chakrams. The Chakrams are first purified and then energised with the specific Mantras. For this, an auspicious day, hour, dithi, lagnam, and nakshatra are chosen to harness the required forces. Chakrams are of many kinds. They help in dealing with human problems, external or planetary influences, as well as meditative purposes.

Mind interprets every experience and associates it with a sound-symbol, a name and a visual form. Similarly, Tantra uses a visual form and sound-symbol to synchronise the mind with its Source. Naturally, some forms are symbolic representations of a subtler nature.

For instance, the ocean is the symbol of life. If one stands at the shore, the Ocean appears endless and mysterious, full of depth, with many creatures within it. Sometimes when people give their opinion of the ocean, I can understand their view to life. Likewise, a wall is symbolic of death.

This is to say that some symbolic visual forms invoke the feeling of an invisible phenomenon, which can only be felt and not grasped by the mind.



A NATIVE TANTRIC TALISMAN

In Siddha occultism, for resolving everyday human problems such as health, illness, possession of a spirit, planetary influences, stagnant situations etc, remedial solutions prescribe the use of occult herbal Talismans.

A Native Tantric follows a certain approach in the preparation of a Talisman. He has to go to the location of the required plant at a particular day and time. He then must stand before the plant without any clothes on. Each of these herbal plants has been cursed by the Siddhas themselves only to ensure these sacred herbs are not easily misused by individuals or put to use in a casual manner. So, before the Tantric can use these plants, the curse needs to be removed. Chanting the 'curse remedial mantra', 16 times at a specific auspicious time, does it. A part of the commonly chanted mantra has been given below.

*"Aum Mooligai Sabam NasiNasi
Sarva Mooligai Sabam NasiNasi*

Oon Ooir Oon Oodalil Nirka Swaha"

(Mooligai means herbal, Sabam means curse, and NasiNasi means die, Sarva means entire, Ooir means life, Oodalil means body, Nirka means indwelling)

After chanting the mantra, with his attention centred in the eyebrow chakra he can cut that part of the root that runs towards the north. He must then cut this into small fragments and bind them with threads of five different colours. After this initial process, the native Tantric can pronounce the defined mantra according to the nature of the problem that he has learnt from his Tantric Teacher and for which the Talisman is being made.

Thus sanctified, the pieces of root, bound in multi coloured threads is known as Kulisam (Talisman) or Moolikai Ratchai (herbal protector). It is then tied at the wrist or worn around the neck of the concerned person to ward off/ resolve the problem.

There is another Tantric remedial procedure for warding off or resolving problems:

A native Tantric prepares a thin copper plate of minimum, 5 centimetre length and breadth, in which Mantric letters along with a chakram or diagram are engraved. It is then rolled and bound by five coloured threads (indicating the five Bhoothas) and offered to the Deities along with Prasadham of rice and black dhal pongal. Lamps are lit in an Agal (small pit) made of rice paste with ghee in which the threads

are inserted and lit. The native Tantric then performs a Pooja and chants specific Mantras. Camphor is lit in a plain plate or in a pot containing the offerings and shown to the face of the 'affected person' in circular movements while he sits facing east. Thus, the sanctifying process is performed and the Kulisam (Talisman) is tied to the affected person at the hip or with a yellow thread around his neck.

The third remedial avenue is the use of solidified mercury.

An adept native Tantric uses solidified mercury for certain occult remedies. It is a more powerful remedy than the ones described earlier, but also more complicated and can be learnt only through the lineage of Oral teachings.

The solidified mercury is in the form of a bead. This mercury bead is most commonly called as Rasa Mani. Nowadays, commonly available mercury beads from temple areas, market places or some fakes are actually dead beads. They are not 'alive' as needed. There is a way to check the genuinity of a mercury bead at a physical level. It can be verified by throwing it to the ground. If it rebounds it is genuine. This test is purely at a physical level and its verification is not enough to recognise the true potential of the bead.

The ancient Siddhas have prepared 64 types of mercury-based beads to be used as remedies for difficulties ranging from health, affluence, meditation, aerial visit etc.



POWER SPOTS

Power Spots are places, spots or locations where the Higher Intelligence presides. It is ancient custom in India to visit and be in such power spots and is considered equal to visiting and being with the Master Himself.

As humans, we carry a certain conditioning and prefer to meet a Master in the physical form. But the underlying motive behind such a desire is only to allow ourselves to throw or superimpose our projections on Them; or we may be looking for some recognition or authority in this way.

Victimised by the confines of human conditioning a majority of us don't truly know how to relate to the Higher Intelligence or to the invisible Masters presiding over these spots. Maybe, because we feel our inability in approaching Them as we would while visiting a Master in His body. This is why followers, devotees or disciples switch over to new teachers after their Master leaves His body. It simply demonstrates our perception of wanting to see the Master only in the physical realm and limiting Him to our physical identification alone.

After visiting several various Samadhi Shrines, Ancient Temples etc., I classified these spots based on my experience and on the insights They related or communicated in their own unique way while I was physically present there. Even though I found my experiences coining into 3 kinds I would specifically like to underline that all higher energy spots remain beyond any kind of categorisation. I have ventured to describe their characteristics so that the reader can get a glimpse of the presiding divinity and intelligence. I request the reader to not confine or hold rigidly to these descriptions as the only true nature of Divinity as Divinity is beyond all words and descriptions.

QUALITY OF PRESENCE

The presiding higher intelligence of certain Samadhi Shrines or ancient sacred places touched me internally, expressing a warm quality. I could feel the heat in my body and had certain energy-based experiences such as the opening of Chakras. At times, I distinctly sensed the prana moving in the Nadis. At other times, I envisioned colours or different kinds etc. Most of the places that kindled such experiences were the Samadhi shrines of enlightened Yogis or were holy spots where Yogis had attained their Samadhi experiences and left that energetic quality for coming generations.

On the other hand, I encountered completely different experiences while visiting certain other spots. It was an experience of a different mysterious quality; sensations of cool energy touching me or descending through me, filling me with its reverberant quality. These kinds of experiences were more

on the subtle side compared to the previous kind of gross energy based experiences I had in the spots of Sages belonging to the Yogic path.

I was met with cooling energies in Samadhi shrines belonging either to devotional Saints or Sages who were Realised through a particular Upasana and had connected with only a few close devotees and chosen disciples. Some of them may even have lived like mad persons and performed many miracles of the mundane aspect but spiritually had transmitted Their entire quality to a maximum of one or two to continue the lineage.

The third kind of spiritual spots, I found are rather rare and flourish beyond psychic sensing. In such places, one would mostly not feel anything. It appears as if the presiding intelligence doesn't relate with us at all. We experience neither a warm nor cool energetic relationship. It appears as though there is nothing at all. In truth, these are the most vital places that work on us without our knowing; burning all our Vasanas, Karmas. These glorious places are the ruling abodes of Gnana Siddhars who lived without following any conventional path except His own understanding, unfolding and realisation. This sort of a place that appears to neglect you in the start would actually be devouring your chain of births and deaths by completely swallowing you after it has completely accepted you in it. Here the working quality or nature of blessing does not give any experience to further colour your journey. Having an established relationship by His grace eventually ends the experiencing person himself and dissolves the individuality itself, into His ever-staying Existence.

I would also like to share an exceptional sort of Samadhi spot that I find to be beyond all the three categories cited above. In these exceptional kinds of Samadhi places the presiding presence does not impose its own quality upon you and nor does it impose the path through which the Sage may have attained His realisation. Instead, He reveals to you the path that belongs to you. You would encounter strange mystical experiences that are unique or exclusive only to you. He would guide you through your journey regardless of His own quality as He is beyond all paths. Sometimes we could even encounter them in person or sometimes they send you somewhere else as the next phase in your journey. In some places, the presiding Master expresses himself as a deity or even as another Master to inform you of your personal deity or point you to the Master to whom you can relate to in your journey. Such Masters are rare and exceptional Gnani's or Siddha Purushas who are beyond all definitions. The primal intelligence itself shows you the present state of yourself and guides you, using your own unique way to your next destination in the journey of feeling oneself.

In all kinds of Power spots, I encountered a single quality emerging, which was common to all. Each Samadhi shrine or ancient holy temple no matter

the quality of the presiding presence radiated its own unique fragrant quality or aroma, just as each man has his own odour according to his physical health and psychic temperament.

This fragrance is the medium through which the higher intelligence or the presiding Sage works. Fragrance travels beyond all concepts of space, time and distance so, once a person is attuned to His distinctive fragrance, it is no more a mere medium but is the Sage Himself, who, as a breeze of His fragrance comes and touches us when we refuge ourselves before Him.



Experiencing oneness with the divinity of a Sage and melting into His presence can happen once the heart opens by the grace of the divine presence and the person relates with a particular holy place. He then responds and attunes to other places he visits too. His open-to-grace heart can quench its divine thirst in other holy places also. An inner humbleness, devoid of a prejudiced mind and a surrendering attitude coming from ones whole being, opens the heart for manifesting the divinity at the feet of that divine presence.

For this, it is natural we must stay in and around that holy place for some duration and make ourselves available to the presiding presence there.



SVANUBHAVAM - My Journey, a glimpse

I am speaking of the days when the impact of competitiveness and the miseries of living in the world had not yet entered the mind and had not yet hampered the wild spirit of spiritual innocence...

Manickam Vasagam is not only a soul friend but also a spiritual colleague and moral supporter in this mundane world. One day he shared an unusual and strange incident he had experienced in the Meenakshi Amman Temple in Madurai. I have asked him to write his experience down for the book and have presented it below, as it is...

“Right from my college days I was related to Sri Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi. The relationship was not as with a Maharishi but as with a simple old man who knows me very well - better than anybody, including myself. I was never religiously inclined and little spiritually, only because of my association with the ‘old man’.

It was July 17th of that year. There was a small gathering in Madurai in memory of the enlightenment day of Sri Bhagwan held in the

house Sri Ramana Manthiram where he had got his realisation. Towards the end of the gathering, the authorities of that place asked to meet me. They informed me about some renovation underway at Tiruchuzhi (the birth place of Sri Bhagwan), Sri Bhoominatheshwar Temple and devotees of Bhagwan were taking part in it. The temple authorities wanted to renovate the inner sanctum of Sri Bhoominatheshwar Temple and make it like the Meenakshi Amman Temple of Madurai, by laying granite on the floor and walls. The authorities were planning to go to the Temple to see the special type of granite and they wanted me to accompany them, as I was a civil engineer by profession. I agreed.

By special permission, we were allowed to enter into the innermost sanctum. Generally, in South India, the common public is never allowed to enter into the inner most sanctum of a temple. Over and above, it was truly a rare privilege when the priest who accompanied us asked me to go near the statue of the Great Goddess Sri Meenakshi to identify the stone used in the flooring. I didn't know I was stepping into the great unknown and into an unexplainable episode of this birth.

'I stepped in; true to my heart, all I can say is, 'I cant express what I am face to face with'. To talk about it is very hard, almost impossible. I didn't see the floor or the wall! All my being was attracted towards the Statue. It was soul attraction. I tried to remind myself of my purpose, but it had been simply washed away by the great charm of the statue.

Now I began sensing that it was not a statue but the most beautiful girl I have ever met, with a slender waist, labouring under the weight of quickly perspiring breasts, touching her armpits and bursting from the brassiere covering them. I could sense the weight and extensive hips and the back, giving her a proportionate beauty. She was standing in a most stylish way, so graceful.

It was love at first sight but to my surprise in those few minutes a burst of tears gushed out from my eyes and I didn't even know why. Suddenly I heard the voice of the priest, 'Enna pathutingula? (Have you finished looking?). I came out full of tears and words didn't come. I couldn't communicate. I was silent. The gentleman easily sensed my inability and didn't disturb me by asking anything regarding the granite.

That meeting made a radical change in me. I felt a strong attraction to that 'girl'. I was infatuated by, Her! The next day

at the same time, I was pulled to Her temple. But this time I couldn't go near Her. I had ample time and could see Her for a long time in a relaxed way. When I came out, I was like a drunkard. I couldn't feel what was going on around me and I didn't care for anything. Somehow, I tried to remind myself that I am becoming insane by coming to the Temple but the pull was irresistible.

Whenever I entered the Temple my world consciousness would slowly fade. I didn't do it deliberately. It was a spontaneous, similar to when we are engaged in something and we don't have to drop other things. As time proceeded, my intoxication was heavy with no trace of body consciousness. I used to drool heavily and my clothes would be wet. To give vent to my intoxication I used to wander in the unmanned premises of the Temple. In those areas, you are left unnoticed. I regularly wandered those premises after meeting my Love. Since I never had any religious inclinations I could cope with my inner responses with the Great Goddess Meenakshi without any guilt.

I would frequently enter one area where there was nobody except for a row of Siva lingams. I would hear a peculiar sound. It sounded like someone was breathing sharp and heavy. But in my intoxication, I didn't mind anything and was indifferent to any externals.

One day (around ten days after the first meeting) I entered Her shrine; I was left dumbstruck by her middle region particularly Her breasts. I was lost in Her beauty and when I came to my senses, I was suckling Her breasts like a child and murmuring, 'Amma, Amma...' (Mother, Mother...). I felt closer to Her than ever and the intoxication too was very heavy so I slowly started to move towards my favourite unmanned area. Before I entered that area, I felt as if someone was showering incense on me. It was my favourite incense, Sambrani Dhoop. I was very sensitive to that and it particularly made me meditative. In that state of mind, I didn't even question the logic of how in that place, so close to me, was someone showering incense when no one was there!

Induced by the incense I was murmuring, 'Amma, Amma', and I went my usual way. All along, I was amidst the mist of the incense. When I reached one spot I suddenly heard a wild and quick breath coming just fifteen feet away from my left. In an instant of hearing the breath, the incense smoke also disappeared. Now I was back in my senses. I felt the

trap, something mystic, unusual. All the ten days I had felt something was surrounding me, unnoticed. A tint of fear made my steps longer and faster. I could hear the wild breath from each Siva lingam, one after the other!

It was terrible and I couldn't believe it to be a miracle. But I could see the tremendous intelligence in the trap. It must be an invisible being. I wanted to cross that area quick and safe. Somehow, I could intuitively sense that it was targeting me. I wanted to get out. I thanked God as I came out a few steps ahead of that area and sighed a sense of relief. It was a great escape.

Suddenly the breath with its entire wilderness came in front of me. Then like a stone it hit the left side of my chest and breathed something from that spot as if sucking by its nose. The attack was totally unexpected. Anyone in my position would have fainted or lost consciousness but all of a sudden once again the fragrance appeared, as if to announce that the operation was over and a success.

I came to my senses with the fragrance of the incense. I was wonderstruck by the incident, the plot! The intelligence and the precision of attacking a moving object at its centre, a place that does not respond like the other parts of the body!

Overwhelmed by the entire episode I immediately shared this incident with my friend Pal that night itself and described all that had happened. I was sure that anyone who goes there can, hear that breath from the Siva Lingams."

I was shocked hearing his experience and his statement claiming anyone who went there would have the same mysterious experience. The next evening at around 8 pm, I went with him and another friend to the Temple. Manickam and I stood waiting until the other friend entered the mysterious area. We were wondering whether he would have had any experience or not. It was around ten minutes before he returned and said, 'nothing strange', in the most normal way.

Manickam said, 'Ok, Pal you go now and let us see whether anything happens to you'.

I went into that Prakaaram (the circular path closest to the Sanctum). It was silent. I noticed all the people coming to the Temple for Darshan avoided coming to this area and instead after their Darshan of the Meenakshi Goddess immediately proceeded to the Siva Temple area for Darshan. This place stood in between. Sensing the Silence eagerly awaiting me I entered into that area. There were eleven Siva Lingams

situated in their small separate shrines. I stood in front of each one and put all my attention to see if I could hear any unusual breathing. But nothing! No sound at all. As much as I tried to hear the mysterious sound, the silence deepened. But with some hope and expectation, I moved little by little to each Siva Lingam. I even stood for a few minutes before the shrine considered the Samadhi of Siddha Sundaranandar. But, nothing strange, nothing special or nothing mysterious! Desperately I moved to the next and the next until I reached the shrine of the eleventh Siva Lingam that had a big Nandhi. (The Bull).

Again nothing mysterious!

I said to myself, 'Maybe the experience was specifically meant for Manickam alone, and was not for all.' I wondered why I had had the desire and expectation for it to happen to me. Thinking thus I took a few steps to walk away from the shrine and out of the area. I must have barely taken three steps when I heard the sound of a flying whistle, but I couldn't see anything. The sound not only continued, it increased, and suddenly I felt something approaching me. The whistling sound hit my left chest, in my heart, just like a stone. Even though it was invisible, it was still a concrete form. Yes, it hit my heart, pierced it and came out the back. When it hit me my whole body shook under the speed of the hit. As it came piercing out of my back my body was lifted backwards above the floor almost one and half feet and I was literally thrown back. Not only the hair on my head, but all the hair on my body was standing up. The whole death-fear assaulted me in that moment and from that fear, anger filled me up. I immediately looked back to where the Siva Lingam was. During the experience, I had sensed that after piercing and lifting me the stone like whistling bubble had finally reached into the Siva Lingam and merged into it. In my fear of death I forgot my so called common sense and asked the Siva Lingam as if it were a person, 'Hey, what, what do you need?' And as soon as I had asked, I could hear the strange sound, the breathing. Not a human breathing but as if the whole earth was breathing. I could hear it coming from that Lingam. I immediately realised my foolishness and ignorant reaction to the experience. The entire atmosphere changed and a milky white light manifested in the whole place. I felt that I was floating in the ocean of milky white light. I could hear that vertical column of a long thundering breathing start to manifest in each Siva Lingam one by one. I was in complete intoxication of that oceanic ecstasy forgetting all my surroundings. I felt that the sound of the pillar-like breathing touching the very core of my heart!

I returned happily to my waiting friends. I walked, but I felt I was slowly flying to them. My friend Manickam smiled in recognition. He could sense what had happened. Later he told me, 'Your eyes were emitting the graciousness, the graceful light.'

From that night whenever I would go to sleep, suddenly near my bed, a pillar or column of breath, an embodiment of a mysterious entity would manifest by its sound. That rhythmic breathing sound would engulf me, my waking state of consciousness and I would sleep in it or I would slip into it. It went on like this for ten days. I later realised my breathing pattern had changed.

Impressed by this experience Manickam and myself wished to know what this experience was and who was implementing it. We asked many people, priests, so called Tantric's, Yogic practitioners etc. We asked around for almost a year. Nobody could tell us anything. Many thought us to be crazy. Some gave us irrelevant reasons, nothing of which felt true.

After a year long effort of enquiring, we finally decided to directly encounter the entity by our own dedication. As per Manickam's suggestion, I sat in meditation in the mysterious area. I chose to sit before the Shrine considered Siddha Sunderanathar's. Here I received answers about the strange and unheard of experience we had encountered a year ago. During the entire year, we had frequently visited the Temple and even walked through this area. We had heard the grand breath coming from different corners from time to time but we had never again encountered anything like that day.

In meditation I was informed two things - one about Manickam and one about myself. His life was going to unfold under the guidance of the Ancient Tantric path. And as for me, after this encounter the ancient Siddhas started to visit. My life, in dedication to them became more intensified under their guiding hand. I had been taken into the world of the Siddhas.



This was a period when a flood of mystical experiences, were daily food in the journey of life. There were visible signs of communication, concrete experiences of contact and an irresistible longing to communicate with the divine presence along with the unmistakable touch of the gracious hand of Sages in each and every circumstance. What were enthusiastic mystical experiences or miracles became commonplace things and all of life seemed drastically hastened by the pull towards the communion with the divine presence.

Due to the masquerading mystical experiences and the ever-bursting spiritual aspiration, I was living in an unearthly way, in different kinds of worlds and a different sense of perception. The blazing fire of the Kundalini Sakthi had totally dried the Ojas of the inner Nadis and had severely aggravated the Vatha in the nervous system. I frequently suffered headaches. The headache was peculiar, a killing one. Whenever I was caught by a headache, it not only caught my body but also my level of perception, psychic mood and the entire subtle functioning of the body. I couldn't relate with the external world. My eyes could not blink. My sight would be fixed and seemed to be staring somewhere lost. There would be no obvious breathing through the nose. All the Prana, fused with the fire would circle in my forehead spreading through the uvula, the hole in the upper palate. Many a times I thought my head would crack. The headache would last almost one and a half days. My body was like a limp shirt hanging on a hanger. But at these times, my whole body would be highly sensitive. My whole being could sense anything in my surroundings. When it lasted more than one day and I reached a stage of being saturated by the pain I couldn't even walk. With tears, I would crawl to drink some hot water, as it would slightly pacify the head-breaking headache and convulsions happening in my body.

At this time, once again Manickam told me of an ancient Tantric Temple at Uddhara Kosa Mangai and the captivating presence prevailing there. Manickam had felt a strong pull and connection with Lord Natarajar of Uddhara Kosa Mangai. On the occasion of, 'Arudhra', the day when Lord Siva manifested as the blazing light of consciousness, I went along with him. The Arudhra day is being celebrated since the ancient times in all Siva Temples in Tamil Nadu.

We have already spoken of this particular ancient temple in the First Section of the book under the title of Kaga Busundar Maharishi. There we have described the nature of the temple, the Emerald Natarajar and spoken of the temple authorities and regulations of not allowing any devotees to stay over night in the temple premises.

On the occasion of Arudhra, Manickam and I went for the Darshan of Lord Natarajar. Once again by the gracious, but intense and mysterious level, the fire of Kundalini blazed spontaneously and intensely in response to my aspiration for the Darshan of the gracious dancing Siva. I came out of the temple with a severe headache. My jaws involuntarily opened and eyes turned upwards. Seeing my miserable condition Manickam said, 'We can drop our plan to be here overnight and return home instead'. But I was hesitant to return so I replied that I would manage.

Manickam was already familiar with some of the local people there, as he had lived there for some time as a Sadhu. Coming out of the

temple, we were met by an old woman who lived in a small portion of the tower. She was a mysterious woman. I was introduced. We spoke with her for some time. She said, 'There is an old Samadhi Shrine about half a kilometre from the temple. Both of you can go and stay there for the night'. Just as she said this, came a young man. He was the man performing Pooja and worship of the Samadhi Shrine from time to time. His name was Hari Krishna. He looked innocent and pious. The old woman introduced us and ordered him to take us there. The Samadhi shrine we were being taken to was of Satti Swami.

When we reached there, we found it looked uncared for since a long time. It was situated on the outskirts of the temple village, Uddhara Kosa Mangai. It was a small structure, only 12 feet in length and 5 feet in width. The area was separated into two rooms. One was the sanctum and the other the entrance portion. We saw a small lingam inside the sanctum. Hari started the Aarti using camphor and lit some incense sticks.

I saluted with closed eyes when suddenly I felt a hand stretch out from the Samadhi, touch the inside of my head and then withdraw back into the Samadhi. Although I distinctly felt a hand, it was invisible. Instantly my headache disappeared and I felt a cooling energy descending through my whole body. I couldn't believe it. It was amazing. I saluted to the Sage's Samadhi with joyous tears. I happily reported all of this to Manickam.

Within half-an-hour we started back towards the Siva temple for our second Darshan of the night. To my surprise and shock, the headache reappeared. Instantly I understood that it had been none other than Satti Swami who was responsible for the disappearance of my headache half an hour ago. We had the darshan of the dancing Lord and with the headache we travelled back home.

I resolved to come back to Satti Swami the next full moon.

In this way, the Sage's shrine captivated me on the very first time. Curious to be with Him we decided to come back and visit every full moon. We would do a pooja and then remain there the whole night in meditative communion.

The next full moon, after Darshan of the Siva Temple we went to the shrine of Satti Swami. Hari Krishna who was performing pooja twice a month; on full moon day and new moon day was waiting for us just as we had planned last month. We did the pooja and sat in a meditative mood. Nothing strange happened. We got up. It was past midnight, around 1 am. We decided to sleep in the front portion of the shrine.

There was a dull light where we slept. As soon as I started to close my eyes, I saw visions of cats and goats falling on my face one after the other, making sounds. It was all happening like three-dimensional effects. This lasted for some time. Then suddenly I heard many people talking amongst themselves. I tried to overcome these disturbances and fall asleep but immediately some voices and animal sounds would disturb me. When once again I tried to sleep, I felt someone pulling at my leg. I instantly opened my eyes and saw someone standing outside staring at me. When I tried to get up, I just couldn't. When I looked at the entrance again, I saw he wasn't there anymore. Then again, I was drawn inside but not to sleep. The entire night passed like this, extremely disturbed. It was around five in the morning when I did finally get to fall asleep.

I woke up at 6.30am. Both, Manickam and Hari were awake and outside talking. We had tea in a teashop located half a kilometre away from the shrine. After tea, I spoke to Manickam about my experiences of the night before. It was a great surprise for me when he said he experienced the same things through the night. In addition, he said that some people had come and sat near his leg while he was trying to sleep and repeatedly requested him for help to be released!

It was strange what was going on in that place and we wondered why the Sage didn't communicate with us that night. The stranger thing was that Hari Krishna said he slept soundly through the night. From this I concluded that this experience was meant only for Manickam and me.

Rameshwaram, in India, is a famous pilgrimage spot and holy place like Banaras. Fifty years ago Uddhara Kasa Mangai was the only way to reach Rameshwaram. Uddhara Kosa Mangai was then a town and not a village as it presently is. Not only was it the main resting place for the pilgrims travelling to Rameshwaram but was also a holy spot because of Lord Natarajar's Temple.

Around 200 years ago, a Sage had suddenly appeared in the town of Uddhara Kosa Mangai. People considered him mad. Nobody knew his real name or from where he had come or what he was doing. He carried a pot (satti) in hand and lived in the graveyard. Sometimes he would go to the big temple of Lord Siva as a beggar begging for food. Whenever he came, a crow would be seated atop his head, a rather rare omen according to normal Indian perception. The crow would take food from the Sage's hand while atop his head. Some people even reported seeing the Sage sometimes go up the temple tower and jump down from there, get up and walk away most normally.

He would bless the people whenever he would go begging for food or whenever people came to see him in the graveyard. People soon

understood it was none other than their beloved Lord Siva himself who had come. The Sages belonging to the 'Choottukol' lineage recognised him and praised him to their followers.

(Choottukol means burning stick. There was a lineage of wandering mystics in the villages of Madurai district. Their way of teaching was unconventional and the name 'burning stick' is the insignia of the mystic enlightenment. Choottukol Ramalingam is the founder of this lineage and Chellappa Swamigal and Mayandi Swamigal, the successors of their lineage.)

As the unknown Sage was always seen with a pot in hand, people began calling him 'Pot Swami', i.e. Satti Swami in Tamil.

The name Satti Swami soon spread to surrounding towns. The King of Ramnad came to Uddhara Kosa Mangai for Darshan and received the blessings of Satti Swami. The King donated a land in the graveyard for the devotees of Satti Swami to carry out some good activities for other oncoming devotees.

After Satti Swami left His body, He was buried on that land with rituals and ceremonies. A priest performed a regular pooja. A small building was built for providing free food to the pilgrims and devotees who were on Rameshwaram Yatra and had come to worship this Samadhi Shrine. But in succeeding years many things declined because of devotees who fell short in organising, managing and maintaining the shrine. Some years later, people completely forgot the place. Over time without any supervision or care, the Samadhi shrine was buried under the ground.

Then, just forty-five years ago came a Sadhu from north India, named Suresh Prasad, a pilgrim to Rameshwaram. On his return from Rameshwaram, he heard about Lord Natarajar's temple in Uddhara Kosa Mangai. He came to worship the Lord. A strong connection emerged between him and Lord Natarajar. This is how Suresh Prasad, the north Indian Sadhu, continued to live in Uddhara Kosa Mangai performing a personal pooja to the Lord daily.

On one certain occasion, he needed Bilva leaves for the worship. Bilva leaves are the herbs of Lord Siva offered during pooja. When he asked the villagers where he could find Bilva leaves they informed him that the village had only one Bilva tree, located half a kilometre away in the graveyard. Immediately he proceeded to the graveyard in search of the Bilva tree. He found the tree near a small damaged building! He noticed a snake with its hood raised, seated under the tree, as though waiting for him. The snake began moving and then entered into the small damaged building. Suresh Prasad followed.

On entering the building, he saw the snake seated beside a small stone. The Sadhu approached closer, curious to see what the stone was. Instantly he felt a strong and overwhelming presence vibrating from it, which kindled his heart unconditionally. He had a divine experience and sensed this place to be the samadhi shrine of a great Sage.

Saddened by the damaged condition of the shrine and the area around, the sadhu gathered a few local children from the village school and with their help cleaned the place. He even stopped visiting the Siva Temple as he felt that Lord Siva had guided him to the shrine of this great Sage. Gradually the Sadhu renovated even the Samadhi shrine by building a tomb and a Nandhi Bull. He performed pooja daily and attained a one on one communication with the Sage. He spent 27 years living in this divine way.

One day he was laying down in front of the temple when Lord Natarajar appeared and ordered him to go to Kasi. So, the very next day he called some of the youngsters who he was acquainted with by a spiritual relationship. They were simple innocent village people. He gave them the key of the Samadhi Shrine. He said, 'you are youngsters and I don't mind if you would do the daily pooja or not because I know that all of you will be dragged here when the right time manifests. I am giving you the key to this shrine. This is the best treasure in this world. You don't know the value of the shrine. This place is the source of the Asta Siddhis and ever-awakening grace.' Saying thus Suresh Prasad left.

Those youngsters couldn't manage the shrine and even stopped visiting. Hari Krishna* is one of the youngsters. He is the only one who visits the shrine twice a month for pooja.

[All the above details have been collected from various sources in the village as well as from Hari Krishna.]

Hari Krishna*

I would like to offer a loving tribute to my friend Hari Krishna. Hari, at birth, was diagnosed with two damaged heart valves, which meant only two instead of four were functional. The doctors felt he would not live more than the age of two. Throughout his years, from time to time he had wheezing and breathing troubles. Visits to the nearby hospital were not rare. Each time his family feared the worst. By the grace of Lord Natarajar of Uttar Kosai Mangai, by the grace of Satti Swamy, Hari Krishna grew to be a fine individual of 27 years. Just last month, during the course of the book, he accompanied me on a pilgrimage to the North of India. His health was fine, the journey pleasant and the Darshan of the Lord emanated compassion beyond words. Grateful, we returned to our homes. On the very next night of our return, I received a call from his home. Hari Krishna had been in good health and had gone to bed as usual after dinner. He passed away peacefully in his sleep with no suffering from his illness.

Manickam and I discussed what took place that night in the shrine and recognised it to be threatening games played by ghosts, as the area around was a graveyard 50 years ago. The invisible entities had troubled us. Some had even asked Manickam to help release them from their ghost life by some remedial measures.

After a lot of pondering, we found the reason why Satti Swami had not attended by his presence that night. 'He seemed to be testing whether we could withstand being there or not', said Manickam. So, the ball was in our court now. If we wished to have contact, with His presence we must continue to come and do pooja on every full moon night or we could just drop the entire plan.

As per Indian mythology, Lord Siva would always have Ganas, Monsters and Asuras surrounding Him. Wherever auspiciousness flourishes, surrounding it would be all the inauspicious elements, as they are the 'neediest' of all. It was no surprise at all, that negative entities hankered by anxiety were present around the gracious Sage.

I have heard that when people of a psyche filled with negative Vasanas meet a Sage, all the negative tendencies of their mind erupt in His high-energy presence. This is the reason we have so many negative incidents happening now and then even around a good Sage living in an Ashram. In this way, the Sage helps the tendencies of these people to be spent and nullified.

We returned home that night but didn't give up going to the Samadhi Shrine on every full moon for pooja and for spending time in a meditative mood and thereafter trying to get some sleep. Yes, each time we had to struggle to sleep as we were always troubled by the masquerading evil elements. In the repeated trips we grew familiar with the troublesome experiences and started to handle it quite playfully. All the threatening evil spirits interventions turned into a joke and play for us and we started to influence them in our own way.

I would like to include one more fact here. When we visited the Samadhi Shrine on each succeeding full moon we were often accompanied by other friends. None of them ever had any experience like we had. The next morning our friends would say, 'we slept deeply'; 'we didn't even wake up in the night' etc. But Manickam and I both observed one thing in their sleep patterns. After they lay down, they instantly fell asleep and there was a distinct change in their breathing mode. They breathed long snores mixed with whistling sounds, which happen only when one is utterly exhausted. They were being entirely influenced by the entities and their energy was being taken by the entities as food. We realised this when the next morning all the friends would complain of severe body ache, lower back pain or leg pain.

Another detail I would like to add is that in all the succeeding trips we never felt the divine presence to be there at all. It seemed as though we were sleeping in a graveyard, which by no means had any divine connection.

We also noticed that after the full moon night when we went to the tea shop half a kilometre away the following morning, people would stare at us strangely. Few even had a surprised look on their face. When I looked into their eyes they seemed to ask, 'How are these people still alive after sleeping the entire night in that place?' Yes it was true. That is why nobody went there and nobody did pooja or any other kind of activity. It was obvious that the people living there considered this place as evil and filled with ghosts and monsters.

From the start, I had had a strong conviction that the place was very sacred and a stainless auspiciousness prevails there as grace. You may wonder why? It was because of my head splitting headache and the fainting that I had long suffered and which had badly disfigured my vitality. I had tried many authorities and knocked the doors of many practices to pacify the aroused Kundalini but nobody had been able to do anything. Nobody was available to pacify the furious Goddess, the Mother Kundalini. But the Sage, Satti Swami had pacified it so simply in a minute by His mysterious Holy touch. I always like to be the first person to validate, respect and greet my personal experience. If I couldn't, then how could I salute the Higher Intelligence, the Divine Presence that had gifted those experiences to me?

We both felt a strong urge to know more details of the samadhi shrine and its surrounding mysteries. We started to ask around the village and ask spiritually inclined people like Hari Krishna. To be frank it was hard for us to gather the information. There were not enough responses from the elders. Also many didn't know any details about the place. At long last and with much effort we gathered the necessary information and figurations that helped us get some conviction of what my personal experience had asserted.

The next full moon we once again stayed at the Samadhi shrine. There was still nothing new. We encountered the same experiences of evil entities and the next morning we would leave. A long succession of full moons, were spent in this way.

A year passed. Once again it was the occasion of Arudra, the holy festival. Two new friends, Manickam and I, the four of us visited the Uddhara Kosa Mangai temple for the Darshan of Lord Natarajar. Fully engulfed by the grace of the Emerald Lord Natarajar we came out of the temple. We met Hari Krishna who was walking towards the temple. He smiled at us in a strange way and said, 'it is hardly possible to stay at the Samadhi shrine.' When we asked why he said, 'Satti Swami is playing some Leela'.

He explained he had gone there this evening to clean the Samadhi Shrine for the Arudhra occasion and our stay there that night. As he opened the small door of the shrine, he saw a big cobra snake inside. Frightened, he gave up the idea of entering into the shrine

altogether and leaving the door open he had run from there. He was upset that Swami was playing some Leela (the divine testing game). In the end Hari Krishna added, 'it is up to you to decide whether to stay there or not.'

Frankly speaking, we already knew how hard it was to sleep in a closed room of six feet by six feet. It was enough for four people to sit or two to sleep. Over and above this if there was a snake in there how were we to even enter? It would surely endanger our lives. Hearing all of this Manickam was a little afraid. As for me I was infuriated. It was as if Satti Swami had deliberately created the situation as a challenge to test our fortitude, faith and tolerance. I retorted, 'Yes, we can go'. Manickam joined in. One of the new comers left to spend the night at Ramnad. There were four of us now, including Hari Krishna. We reached the Samadhi Shrine.

As soon as we stepped into the Samadhi Shrine, all fear of the Cobra mysteriously disappeared. We lit some incense. As we were tired by the journey and the news of a Cobra's presence we decided to sleep immediately. There was deep silence everywhere and the light of the full moon fell all around the Samadhi Shrine.

It would have been no more than ten minutes of lying down. There was dead silence around. All the connections to the external world suddenly withdrew. The body started to become numb, even dead. Unexpectedly by the massive force of a hand, within a fraction of a second I was pulled within and dragged as a cranial vault towards my skull and hit the skull which opened it. Yes, it was opening the entire top portion of my head, the skull. My whole consciousness was, withheld there by this mysterious Hand. From there, my consciousness saw the infinite expanse of Golden Light. The golden light was like a V-shaped endless tunnel and the Samadhi lingam was the entrance of it; there my whole consciousness was being held. The surrounding walls of the shrine had disappeared and my sensitivity spread infinitely in all directions.

The eternal Dancer of consciousness, Dancing Siva - Lord Natarajar manifested in that expanded tunnel. Satti Swami, who was as the entrance dragged my consciousness to have the Darshan of the eternal Cosmic Dancer!

This went on through the night, up to 5.00 am in the morning. At the entrance of the Golden Tunnel and from the Samadhi Siva Lingam waves and waves of harmonious grace descended through a channel to the spiritual heart centre in the right chest. It was a small aperture, like a mouth, chanting Siva, Siva...Siva, Siva... - which was going on involuntarily from the Source-less. All those waves of grace were, swallowed by this chanting mouth in the heart.

The only enlivening phenomena that reverberated as myself, was this mysterious involuntary and spontaneous response of the ever-going chanting of Siva, Siva...

The experience filled the entire night. I came back to my waking state around 5.00 am and I couldn't believe what had happened. I was eager to speak to Manickam about it. He awoke and I heard shocking news. He too had experienced the very same through the night. Strangely enough, the friend who had joined us hadn't had any sort of experience and looked strangely at both of us.

We chose to stay there for one more day. And from our very next trip Satti Swami began to communicate with us.





Sri Satti Swami Samadhi Shrine - Thiru Uttara Kosa Managai Village
(The tower of the Siva Temple is visible behind)

With tears of gratitude to Swami, I would like to share some points with the reader. What happened with us was both amazing and unbelievable and I explain why.

In Yogic lore, opening the Suzhi Munai and reaching the Sahasraram is the goal of all Yogic practices, which possibly can be attained after a whole life's dedication! It is the path of ascent.

Secondly, the waves of grace I described above, descend through a channel to reach the spiritual heart. Normally, Yogi's, after attaining the Sahasraram experience would remain there. Very few reach the level further - the Source. This channel that starts from the Sahasraram and reaches the spiritual heart is called the Para Nadi, Atma Nadi or the Amritha Nadi. Very few enlightened Sages have spoken openly of it. Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi is an authoritative Sage who has spoken openly about it to all of His devotees.

Lastly, I wish to mention 'Ajapa' Japa! Ajapa Japa is not to be confused or equated with Japa or chanting. Ajapa Japa is the involuntary chanting that is ever ongoing within us. Although, it is said that when a Mantra Siddhi is attained the accomplished Mantra chants itself, this is not truly enough. Ajapa is the Natural State - the sound that is ever ongoing within us all, and ever chanting itself! It is a spontaneous self-chanting. It is a rare-realisation that lies beyond normal description.

The reason I describe this encounter as unbelievable is because all these three, extremely rare spiritual culminations were bestowed upon us in a single night, effortlessly, without any pain or difficulty. Yes, we hadn't even prepared ourselves that night for anything by doing any pooja or meditation, like we had on our earlier visits to the shrine. On the contrary, even from our psychic dimension we were tired and un-expecting of anything. The only one thing that we had offered to the Sage was our willingness to sleep - a state lacking the waking state ego.

These are glimpses of rare experiences, spiritual scriptures adore and authorities struggle to guide their followers towards. They had all happened to us in one whole night, in a small damaged shrine, that too in a graveyard!

Even now, there is no one taking care of the Shrine. All the villagers consider the Shrine useless in both, the mundane as well as spiritual aspect.

But Satti Swamy's surging compassion is ever waiting for good souls to receive His gifts. Yes, I call it a gift because to receive a gift one doesn't need any eligibility. At the same time one cannot really ask why; one can only receive the gift. A gift always defies linear logic; a gift always preludes the Love, the unconditional Love.



CRITERIA - Breathing Relationship!

I have put down my concluding thoughts as a final part of this chapter, Power Spots.

I would like to specify that when I say 'Power spots', I don't mean it as a place generating High Power, nor do I mean it to be a place one can get power from, like what we see in modern day movies and TV serials on ancient mythology. I have also seen many people visiting ancient holy places or the samadhi shrines of Sages with the motive or intention of increasing their power. This acquiring tendency won't help in anyway except in pushing such greedy minds further into illusory experiences. I have heard such people speaking soon after returning from sacred spots and exaggerating, 'Oh, there was immense vibration! There was tremendous energy there' etc. They speak of it as if they sat or travelled in a big vibrating machine.

I have used the title Power Spots in a conventional sense and have enlisted authentic experiences or encounters under it. But the real experience can occur only as a by-product of a relationship with the Sage or the Presence prevailing in the spot. It is not power that is prevailing there but a Presence, an extremely compassionate Presence, which indwelled as the human form of that Sage; or it is a Presence adored by many Sages in that holy place. So, even though it may be a Samadhi or an ancient sacred spot, it is the indwelling Presence, that in some way relates with the authentic human nature. It is not some mechanical power that blindly influences whoever goes there. The one and one heart-full relationship paves the way to open the door of a heart-full communication of that presence.

I gathered an interesting insight after these two mysterious experiences and from all the various experiences that happened in many spiritual places.

One can understand these two experiences didn't happen to all present there. It happened with Manickam and me. It is not that it happened to either him or me. So, we can't say that it could happen to everybody nor can we say that it cannot happen to more than one.

Moreover, if the experience does happen to more than one, it need not be the same for all. Why would it differ? Because we differ! Each person varies from another according to their psychic mode, karmic effect and above all their heart-full opening to surrender, depending upon which they get different mystic experiences. Considering all of this, I must call it as 'Intelligence' and not merely a blind force or mechanical power that hits everybody.

The experience that happened that night at Satti Swami's Shrine was not what actually impressed me. It was His compassionate attendance to us, and the way He made us surrender to Him. Yes, He is powerful in that sense. He will make you surrender to the divine presence there. Surrender cannot really happen wilfully by our efforts, then, it is our egoistic activity. Surrender can

never be done by us. It should occur by itself with blowing grace. When you are there the Grace that knows you reveals yourself as an open book for you to immerse in and read by fully being available there.

When you have a deep conviction that yes, somebody knows you when you are in front of Them then the door for the mysterious surrendering starts to open.

I have seen many people call themselves Tantric followers or teachers, performing ridiculous ceremonies or bizarre practices but a real Tantric should be a great offering person. He must spontaneously relate with the divine presence as a natural response as and when it unfolds. A person having this unhindered moving heart for authentic communion can call himself a Tantric, Yogi, Gnani or even an authentic human.

What you encounter in the sacred spot would not give or lead to any experience as a part of your life but be the end of your life in the form of a complete change of life itself. You are born again, anew in front of that Holy Fool's Presence.





Sri Chakra in Human Body

AT THE HALL OF IMMACULATE GOLD

By Siddha Saint Ramalingam,
in His work Tiru Arutpa, Section Aani Ponnambalathe

Refrain

*"In the Immaculate Golden Hall cosmic visions,
What wondrous visions - O Amma!
What wondrous Visions."*

Stanzas:

*"A mountainous light shone,
There was a street, - O Amma
There was a street."*

*"Walking this street, in the middle
There was a stage - O Amma.
There was a stage."*

*"Mounting this stage
There was a gathering point - O Amma
There was a gathering point."*

*"Approaching this gathering point,
Found a seven storied mansion - O Amma
There was a seven storied mansion."*

*"The wonders filled in those seven storeys
How can I speak of it? - O Amma
How can I speak of it?"*

*"In one level there was a glittering pearl,
It turned Blue Sapphire - O Amma
It turned Blue Sapphire."*

*"In another level of the multi-levelled world,
In making the Black blue, the gem turned red coral - O Amma,
It turned red coral."*

*On yet another level, the green emerald
Transforms itself, now a red ruby - O Amma,
Became a red Ruby."*

*"In the level after, a giant pearl,
Became a great diamond Gem - O Amma,
Became a great diamond Gem."*

*"In another different level, an augmented cluster of Coral,
Turned, White Gem- O Amma,
Became a white Gem."*

*“Next storey that I entered, organised multifarious Gems
Turning into Golden jewels - O Amma,
They turned into Gold.”*

*“In the level after, where I settled, all the Gems that I spoke of,
Transformed to Crystal - O Amma,
Transformed to Crystal.”*

*“Above all the seven levels - Was a Pillar!
A harmonious Golden pillar - O Amma,
A harmonious Golden Pillar.”*

*“The moment I saw this golden pillar, climbing, I saw
A novelty! How can I describe it - O Amma?
That Novelty! How can I describe?”*

*While climbing, That confronts me,
Is of boundless measure - O Amma,
Is of boundless measure!”*

*“Sakthis are there, in thousands and thousands
They came - O Amma,
They came.”*

*“When they came and intoxicated - I, undeceived by delusion,
Gaining the sovereignty of Grace - O Amma,
Sovereignty of Grace.”*

*“By way of Sovereign power, climbing the Great Pillar,
I saw its jewelled peak - O Amma,
Saw its jewelled peak.”*

*“Above the Jewelled peak, stood the crest of this peak,
As another, I saw - O Amma,
As another, I saw.”*

*“Above the crest of that peak, a 1008 carat Gold
Temple was there - O Amma,
Temple was there.”*

*“Seeing the Temple, with towering Gate
Went inside, un-hesitating - O Amma,
Went inside, un-hesitating.”*

*“Inside the towering Gate, were Sakthis and Sakthas,
Crores and mutlicrores - O Amma,
In tens of thousands, many tens of thousands.”*

*“There, their colours, white and red
Became colours five - O Amma,
Became colours five.”*

*“There, they all asked, ‘Who is here?’
I went beyond - O Amma,
I went beyond.”*

*“Having gone beyond, and into a sacred entrance
Where there were Sakthis, Five - O Amma,
Where there were Sakthis, Five.”*

*“Others standing there, showed the path ahead
I arrived at a jewelled entrance, O Amma!
Arrived at a jewelled entrance.”*

*“On meditating in that entrance, a woman and man
Were there as two - O Amma,
Were there as two,”*

*‘There they showed, a miniscule sacred opening
I looked in, with love - O Amma,
With love! I looked out.”*

*“Through this holy entrance, found the Mother of Bliss,
As my mother - O Amma,
As my mother.”*

*“Seeing the Mother, received Grace
And dined nectar - O Amma,
Dined Nectar - O Amma.”*

*“With Her gracious support, the sanctum of
The Dancing King, I found - O Amma,
The Dancing King, I found.”*

*“Entering the sanctum, the benevolence I attained,
Only God knows - O Amma!
Only God Knows!”*

Refrain

*“In the Immaculate Golden Hall cosmic visions,
What wondrous visions - O Amma!
What wondrous Visions.”*



SECTION FOUR

RELUCTANT MASTERS

SPIRIT OF SIDDHA

“...And so God created man,
And left him to live his life.
But man said, ‘God, I can’t do without you’.
So God replied, ‘Call me when you need me’.
Relieved to hear that, man let God be on His way,
Leaving man to explore this world, His creation, for himself.

As man explored he learnt more,
As he learnt, he wanted to create
So he called upon God to help.
So whenever man called God came and helped
And life went on like this, until,
Man got too used to having God around him!

So one day, man called upon The Lord
And The Lord came.
Man said to Him, ‘Why have You appeared so soon?’
God replied, ‘Because you called out for me.’
‘Well yes, I called You, but I didn’t need you to come
So promptly’, said man.
‘Oh well, very well’, said God and left.

So the next time when man called out to God,
God didn’t come.
And finally when He did arrive, man was already upset with Him.
‘Where have you been? I have been calling you for so long.’
So God reminded him that he was the one who had asked Him
not to come so quick.
‘Oh, this time I needed you urgently, You should have come
sooner’, replied man.

Now, what could our dear God do
with the strange dual nature of man?
It continued for some time until
God, finally got pretty fed up with the

Ever changing demands of man.

So, He decided to go and hide on the moon.

Unfortunately, man found his way up to the moon and found God.

Seeing Him, man again got upset.

‘What are you doing seated here?

I have been looking all over for you.

I need Your help, so You have to come along

With me Now and help me’.

And so God had to do whatever man asked of Him...

Then, God remembered the old wise man.

And one day He went to seek the wise man’s counsel.

Seeing The Lord walk towards him,

The wise old man smiled, ‘What brings Thee here my Lord?’,
he asked.

So out poured God’s story with man, confessing He didn’t know
what to do.

At this, yet again the old man smiled and whispered into
The Lord’s ears.

Hearing what the old man’s said the Lord too smiled.

He nodded to old man, thanked him and left.

So, soon, man was searching and calling for God.

But this time man could not find God anywhere

He searched and searched; he searched the mountains and trees,

The rives and streams, all the jungles thick and green,

But, God was nowhere to be seen.

Not even on the sun, or the stars or the moon!

Man was left alone in gloom.

As for God, He knew exactly what was happening with man, all
the time.

He had taken the wise man’s advice.

And it seemed to have worked well for Him.

...So what was it that the wise man uttered in God ears?

It had let Him hide from the dissatisfied man.

The wise words of the old man were...

...*‘Go and hide in the man’s heart!’*



AWAKEN FROM ONE'S OWN LIFE FICTION

"What we are looking for is who is looking."

-St.Francis

Did we decide this birth; did we choose our parents or did we even pick the place of our birth?

No! Life seems to be compulsory. Imposed! Once we have been born, to live is a must and we were given no choice about that.

So, from the beginning, right from our birth, *inability* also has taken birth with us!

After we have been born, can we simply remain idle? Here too inability stares us in the face.

As humans, we are extended and related!

Our first relationship is with the Mother and this relationship extends and spreads into a multitude of relationships, through her.

As infants, even though we can physically move our hands and feet it is all out of an instinct to 'do'. *Doings* or activities take on real meaning only when done with a certain orientation or in relation to something specific. For instance, when a baby cries out in order to get fed or when it smiles on seeing the Mother, the first known face to him. In this way, our 'doings' and 'activities' begin at birth and express the inherent survival instinct born to fulfil Life.

Look at any life on earth, we can clearly see that activity that begins at birth hasn't and doesn't stop until death!

Life is nothing but movement!

But, the nature of activity does undergo change. It alters in relation to the stages in life - not only physical but psychological too. Let us see how!

Activities in infancy rise from the simple need for survival. Craving for love and care from our parents gradually extends outwards and spreads out towards play activities and then possessions like toys. It continues to extend as the child grows and gets introduced to the various social, economical, political and religious conditionings prevalent around her.

Her first effort or struggle is to 'fit into' the prevalent setup and feel accepted by the masses or the collective consciousness around her immediate surroundings. For instance play groups, school etc. To feel accepted - is the underlying intention behind most of her activities at this stage.

After passing the primary stage of becoming a member of society, society now rises before her as a performance field. The urge to excel now leads every

activity and everything is a race for excellence. The end of each race declares a winner - the 'best' and the rest as losers or weaker ones.

A struggle for excellence is a disguise for acquiring nothing but power! 'To excel' implies showing others to be weaker. This power struggle flourishes everywhere... through the face of academics, various specialisations, professions, in politics, under religious banners, financially and in spirituality as well.

However, this is how our simple infantile activities gradually alter and take on newer faces as they get ruled over by a hoard of psychological cravings in search of fulfilment.

These new struggles unlike the earlier ones are not in the least intended to satisfy the sole need of survival; instead, they hide the motive of serving the hoard of psychological cravings picked up along the way. Varying from individual to individual these psychological cravings get determined in two ways: first, by one's own individual traits and second, by the type of upbringing and social structure one has grown in. The simple need for survival alters under the influence of these two factors and gets accompanied by a hoard of desires.

In the chapter of Ardhanareeswara, we spoke of how a child explores the external world in all openness but with no sense of discrimination or differentiation. It is from the Mother that the child receives his first learning and it is, the mother who denies him certain desires and wishes. Both, acceptance and denial come from the same source.

An extremely significant turning point takes place at this stage in a child's life. His first encounters of being denied any desire takes the child by shock. This experience of shock is what leads him to an experience of inner hollowness.

Before the toddler-stage, in his waking state the child has felt no sense of separative existence from the mother - his only known world. Now, as a toddler his mother becomes his secure Centre around which his external world revolves. This is how he moves and interacts with the world. So, when the mother herself refuses him something in relation to the outside world, the shock and impact hits at a very core level - the tender toddler experiences it as a severe denial or refusal of his very own existence. The anxiety born of this is what drives him in pursuit of a substitute. This marks the beginning of a compensating process; a method of substitution and the acceptance of the substitute, if he gets it.

All in all, the event of denial either provokes the reaction of a stronger urge or it alters into a substituting process - used to overcome the feeling of hollowness; failing which comes a reaction of retreat.

This is how the 'Fragmenting' starts!

The 'innocent all openness' falls fragmented and henceforth the child interacts with the world from these splits. This fragmenting does not dissolve. Instead, it gradually builds and crystallises decided by each encounter with the outside. All this because it is the external social structure that plays the role of Mother for our growing needs - either by providing or restraining.

Our original childhood experience with our Mother and how it began goes on to reflect even in adulthood while socially engaging with the world.



Man, from birth is under the constant influence of his individualistic traits in forms of urges, emotions and feelings. These inherent traits serve as the streams of his life expression. But, just as in childhood the Mother plays the confining role of watching over all our actions and desires, similarly it often turns out that our surrounding social structure doesn't always allow for the wholesome expression of all our traits. The environment is not always conducive to each ones, inherent traits and cannot be as the structure itself is built on boundaries. So, all traits falling beyond manmade norms remain neglected and unfulfilled. This restraining nature of our social setup acts as a canal for the life stream of our expressions. In other words, every individual is at the mercy of his social structure to fulfil his survival needs as well as his psychological desires.

Adjusting and accommodating within these set boundaries turns Life into nothing but a search and we find we are lost in resolving conflicts between our inherent spontaneity and the boundaries of social structure. By and by, in doing so each one of us grows an added social face or pseudo identity.

Sadly enough, under the external influence, our individualistic traits submit to modification and bend to suit the norms of society. Why?

It is done only so the individual will be considered as 'normal' or 'sane'. Just so, he is yet again considered a member of society and can maintain this apparent normalcy. All individuals are most likely to make this compromise and sacrifice their inherent individuality. This highly discomforting process is completely against natural order and only paves the way for a growing hollowness in ones heart and mind.

This process doesn't end here. Differing from individual to individual, Man continues to shun himself until at some point in life demands, pressures run high and he finally questions his free will and stifled identity. It is only now that he realises the extent to which he has been at the mercy of his social set up and how most of his activities have been manipulated by this larger influence.

With his experiences of overwhelming inner hollowness eating away at him, he is unable to ignore the discomfort and unease anymore.

His inner hollowness is due to the prolonged oppression of his inherent individual traits.

Frustrated, he at last sees how far he has come from himself. But, even then, what he follows is a reaction arising from his same fragmented psyche!

Hereafter, come severe efforts to fill up this gnawing hollowness in forms of control games with his social set up - a series of desperate attempts trying to re-establish his individuality that has been by now constantly bombarded by the social structure.

Most of mankind, in this manner travels right from infancy to adulthood; in a continued motion of doings and doings... a never ending series, of unconscious attempts to re-assert ones lost or shunned individuality using acts of establishing and acts of dismantling.

The need to reassert our individuality arises from a feeling of imperfection about oneself and we use these acts of establishing to prove ourselves as perfect. It is similar to how a coward enjoys watching action movies; or enjoys narrating a simple accomplishment or ordinary activity in a highly adventurous manner to those around him.

The need to reassert is pushed into function in direct relation to our external influences or projections. E.g. An individual with an inferiority complex will obviously have a feeling of imperfection about himself. Because of this, he is pushed to reassert his individuality to be perfect by replacing his imperfection and compensating it with a superior behaviour. In this way, his personality gets projected as dominating. In other words, a superiority complex is always disguising an inferiority complex.

In all actuality, the struggle lies in the relative existence of things!

The belief that the sole purpose of Man's life is 'to Excel' and 'be the best' actually continues to hide our efforts of increasing our acquisitions in order to substitute our sense of imperfection and deprivation that started right from infancy.

Our attempts in this direction differ according to the various stages in our life. Gradually, life hangs as a swinging formation of patterned oscillations, wavering between, dropping of old acquisitions and the speedy pursuit of new ones. An effort in pursuit of an acquisition is no different from the effort the dropping or dismantling of a pursuit extracts!

In other words, either way we use effort - to dismantle what we have done or to establish and/or to achieve in life. And, ironically speaking, the world terms this very vicious cycle of acquiring and dropping as, 'growth', 'success' or even as 'progress' in our life!

And why do we do all of this? Because it is the only way we believe, life to be in our hand. We become participants of this kind of a control game. Living such a blind and mechanical cycle and actually thinking it to be Life is the outcome of the mass hypnosis imposed by the social structure!

The false assumption of having control over our life turns each and every life into nothing more than growing patterns of droppings and pursuits. Each life hangs like an intricately woven web constantly demanding or persistently calling forth the whole of our attention and effort. Blinded by the falseness of our assumption we cannot even see it is we, who are under 'its' control! Most of us know Life only as this vicious oscillation.

Not many are aware of the root cause for us to play out our habitual patterns of control games is only to escape the same nagging hollowness within.

This kind of a doing of establishing and a doing of dismantling... does not even lead us to live a life of inner riches!



CONTROL ISSUES

Social structures are more or less similar in nature barring a few minor differences and most of them label 'not to be in control' or especially 'out of control' as taboo! On the other hand, our social setups, under the pretence of mothering our individual as well as collective needs take 'control' and manipulate our desires. An instance of this kind of hypocrisy is commonly seen when social norms consider losing a bit of control under the influence of alcohol as permissible only as long as it is not a total loss of control. Another instance of this pretence is when dressing scanty is said to be of convenience or even a mark of fashion, worthy of praise, but to walk naked is shameful!

Our social structures send out a clear message that only those behaviourally befitting the social set norms will be 'accepted' as 'fit members of society'. The downside consequence of this heavy and rigid, 'expectation oriented' social structure of always being in control is nothing but pressure - a pressure to conform and be accepted! We can either call this a bargain we make to be identified as a member of so-called society or we can even justify it as one of the 'social norms', society sets forth.

Consequently, all the pressure searches an outlet. When we find ourselves utterly overwhelmed, suppressed and imposed over by a heavy dominating social control, it thrusts us into suffering a severe loss of our inherent individuality. Swallowed by this feeling of loss, nagging anxiety and overcome by

hollowness we want Freedom! In the hope of finding an inner freedom, we now attempt to open ourselves towards the Spiritual path!

Do we really want freedom?

Or just, new answers!



SPIDER - GOT BY ITS WEB

"A spider was wandering hither thither.

Freely!

Not understanding this freedom,

Considering itself vulnerable,

He wanted a home.

So, he spun a web.

Next day, he found a meal trapped in the web.

He was elated and happy

That by no effort food had come.

So he spun a bigger web.

Next day, the spider saw that dust was also trapped in his web.

But he didn't give up spinning webs.

Soon there was more dust in its web.

And then even more!

So much, that he couldn't move...

He died!

Even until the last moment, the spider

Failed to remember that

This 'world' he had made!"

So far, our efforts to contest the structures only landed us into bigger and bigger compromises with our own individuality and into even harsher confrontations with the feeling of hollowness within. While some of us don't mind the pressure factor, some at a certain point conclude, society cannot offer them any plausible answers and nor can it welcome what we have to offer. This is the turning point. For the first time we accept, we don't 'fit in'. With this in mind, we approach a new world, with new hope.

Weary and withered we yet carry the weight of all our fantasies and the exhaustion suffered from all the obstacles faced. Unknowingly, we still intend to play out our unfulfilled fantasies, this time using the spiritual realm as our new ground - disguised under words and concepts like transformations, upliftment, empowerment etc.

Did we not try to flee from the intricate web of persistent day-to-day complications of our life that we ourselves had spun? And have we not approached the spiritual realm with the attitude to escape dealing with our concrete realities? Undeniably, we still carry with us and use, all those very aspects that we claim to flee from!

Unaware of this pretence, we proceed into the realm of spirituality with this underlying motive lurking the depths of our mind, urging us to gain control over life. Behind all of this lies the hidden intention of not being swept away by the daily burdens we face just so that we can continue to cling to our fantasy-projected life.

Completely oblivious to all these lurking faces, we hope for change!

Doing nothing different from what we did before, we continue our attempts to express power and gain control, now using the backbone as spirituality.

In this newfound opening, we are met by teachings such as 'look within' to find true happiness! Habitually and unconsciously, we interpret this as 'power lies here'. Instantly our projections conjoin with this simple teaching and turn it into our own interpreted idea. It now serves as another starting point! We feel we have once more gained control over our life to channelise the pace of our life in a favourable manner and fulfil our desires and goals.

Very few know from valued experience how attempts to control life are ultimately futile as life has its way of turning the tables on us. Our adventure in 'looking within' becomes yet another process we employ - picturing a spiritual ideal and setting out to attain it, in an *excluded* way! We set out to attain this particular teaching and we are dangerously unaware of how all our efforts are actually being fuelled by our old approach of acquiring happiness. In our ignorance, what we have done is nothing more than *spiritual materialism* by applying a purely utilitarian approach to attain our new-found goal of spiritual upliftment.

This ignorant habit is deep-rooted conditioning; a habit of deciding what we want, structuring or restructuring our view of life, or even restructuring our outer situations accordingly. The motive? The comforting presence of a specific and active working focus! It gives the illusion of us being 'back in control'.

Our goal or our ideal picture of ultimate spiritual fulfilment stands before us in the future. It is what we are working towards. But, does this ideational approach truly free us from the nagging hollowness within? Temporarily! It does appear as though we have succeeded in bringing the nagging hollowness under control, but this driving force we use to reach our goal actually acts as a substituting factor and veils the depths of our unhappiness!

We believe we are unfulfilled by this existing moment!

What generates such a realistic feeling of un-fulfilment is none other than our restlessness and sense of abandonment. That is why, rather than accepting things just as they are, dreaming of our spiritual ideal in some way seems more appealing and comforting in comparison to our sense of abandonment, which is why we prefer to continue our external search, outside of ourselves, to acquire or pursue some practice. It is all done to become fulfilled and secure.

With this kind of a mindset we affiliate ourselves to some establishment like ashrams, spiritual groups etc. but yet remain dissatisfied. Then, living out the same habitual pattern of superficiality and skin deep attitude, we change ashrams, groups or jump from teacher to teacher, as if shopping in a spiritual supermarket. The Awareness shop, The Kundalini shop, The No-mind shop, The Advaitic shop, The Tantra shop and The Yoga shop, and now even The New Age Spirituality shops.... A variety and change of products, so to speak!



But, this is not to say that anything external cannot bring temporal happiness. This externalised approach only gives birth to a kind of enslavement, dependency or expectancy, which is what carves patterns of acquiring tendencies. It creates more than a basic sense of anxiety within us. We live harbouring a subconscious fear, a fear that things may change, or something won't last. We even dread losing what is currently adding fulfilment to us.

In this state of fear and anxiety, we once again try and assert the same kind of control as before. We do it in order to keep what we have currently held onto. This doesn't even have to be an insidious form of control. It can be as plain as following expectations in order to remain a member of a spiritual group or to maintain a relationship with a teacher or even fanatically adhere to a teaching. All of this ends up enhancing the neurotic grasping tendency of the Ego as it is being fuelled by a fear of deprivation along with ones inner hollowness.

This is the simple flaw in the *acquiring habit* of searching 'externally'. If one adds something to oneself to attain happiness or fulfilment then when that something is taken away or ceases to be, one finds himself unhappy! The same nagging unhappiness has rebounded back to show again its ugly face again; to clutch and to demand attention, only now it grips or stands in an even more crystallised form.



Ok! What happened? We are back where we started; confronting the original problem. To keep what we want requires control and reasserting control in order to have what we want is still how we live... We are not free!

But those who believe that 'to control' is Freedom are they not merely diving further into the bondage and control of the very approach of control? We are looking at two sides of the same coin! Even after exerting control to maintain our ideal, we are not free – so how can it be ideal? We are stuck!

But, wait, there shines a silver lining around this dark cloud of this neurotically driven habitual life. The hidden value in searching externally is that the search eventually exhausts itself, leaving us with no other option but to be with ourselves; where the Primal Knot is.

My teacher once asked me, *“A sword can cut other things, but can it cut itself?”*



WHERE WE MISS...

“Enlightenment is not something you can achieve; it's a state of being.”

“I am not the body, I am the SELF.”

“Don't analyse thinking, but forget the thinker.”

“You are consciousness.”

“Nothing ever happened.”

These are powerful words uttered by the *Knower's of Truth!*

In ancient times, whenever words such as these were uttered by Saints, they instantaneously transformed beings; blessing them with the direct experience of Truth. Even in recent times, Nisargathatha Maharaj, a realised soul, received only one teaching from his Guru, who said, *“You are not this body”*. This one statement was all that was needed for Nisargathatha to realise himself. By living this one single teaching, He made it come alive through him.

Today we have many books, commentaries and even articles of recorded questions and answers, between Guru and his devotees. Even if one may have read one and all, nothing has happened! Can we honestly accept that from all the questions we read in these articles, none has proved to be 'our' burning question; and the answers recorded in there are in direct relation to the concerned devotee? By engaging ourselves in mere readings, we are only in-sensitising ourselves and are obviously not able to realise the true significance and potency of a direct teaching!

I recall a story:

“One day a person heard of a Sage living in a nearby village. Out of sheer curiosity, he went there. He met the Sage. He offered his

salutations and asked to know the nature of God or Truth. The Sage looked at him and said, "If possible, please stay here until nightfall." Evening fell and many people came for blessings from the Sage. One amongst them asked, "This world is frustrating, what is the way to attain eternal peace?" The Sage remained silent. Another asked, "What is Samadhi?" The Sage remained silent. In this way many people continued to ask questions, yet the Sage remained silent throughout it all.

In this time suddenly a newcomer entered with urgency and looked around at all seated there. Reluctantly, he showed the Sage a piece of paper. Glancing at the paper, the Sage arose from his seat and dragged the newcomer to the outside with him. He returned a few minutes later.

Soon darshan time was up and all the people saluted and dispersed. After watching this, the person who was asked by the Sage to stay until nightfall, slowly asked the Sage "You didn't respond to most questions asked by the people, but you instantly responded to the one who came in and showed you a paper. May I know what was in that?"

Sage looked at him smilingly and said, "He was enquiring about somebody's address which was written on that paper." The Sage continued, "All the people asked many questions but only momentarily and superficially, for after leaving this place, they won't even think about what they asked. The questions didn't come from the core. To me the newcomer's question was far more genuine, than the other superficial ones; the only one really worth answering. So I did."

One can ponder the words of Sages; one can play with it in the mind; one can turn it over and around and maybe, just maybe, have some apparent success. For a while, it seems you have found 'the answer'. You tend to fix the answer in your mind and make it 'the path' or a way to act or believe. But, sooner or later, it becomes heavy work to adhere to the make believe and you begin a fight. You try and reassert it; sometimes by more thinking or often through more practices or sometimes even by simply clinging harder to the belief. Or, you may even try to control it by making excuses, rationalising and eliminating anything that now does not fit.

Eventually you tire. Tired from the struggle and you drop it or replace it with a new teaching, only to continue the same process - lifetime to lifetime!

All in all, whether we focus on inner change or outer, either way the result turns out the same: we are back at the point we first started. This should clearly show the futility of the search and the frustration resulting from it.

Whether spiritual fulfilment is sought externally through groups, practices or internally through ideas and teachings, either way it usually tapers away, leaving us once again desperate and lost.

We have all experienced how bursts of enthusiasm can wane and taper off over time. Even though we are trying spinning our wheels again and again, we find ourselves getting nowhere!

So?

Is it time for a change of group or practice?

Or is it time to learn more new teachings?

Or then, is it time to try harder?

Any of these could work for those of us who feel deeply happy doing it. But for some, the continual waning away of enthusiasm, the hardness of slipping back into unhappiness and facing the sharp reminder of our inner hollowness turns frustrating. After all this effort the problem still stands.

The knot left to be untied! Until you come home!

Acquiring and projecting interpretations is what we have done in the name of spirituality!

We first ideated our transformation to be awaiting us, somewhere some place and devised a conceptual framework towards it. Based of this we adhered to some means in order to attain it. After which urging ourselves, we engaged in the various ways offered by groups, workshops etc to try and capture it.

But all the while, ignored and unattended, the demanding attention of our day-to-day life also travelled parallel to us! Inevitably, at some point we are compelled to co-relate our conceptual framework of transformation with our concrete day-to-day life. In other words, we try and solve our nagging day-to-day problems of concrete realities using our projected idea of spiritual transformation. But how can an idea, a projection, break a barrier or resolve problems? It obviously doesn't work. We feel let down and defeated by life. The teaching didn't work; it fell through.

What happened?

On entering the spiritual realm, our first action was to assign spirituality a label of something exclusive, a goal! After that, we attempted all possible dramas in order to perform that role. During a crisis, we naturally tried using what we thought we knew, but found ourselves empty-handed. Unfortunately, from all of the belief structures we had built; from all the practices we had learnt, nothing in us had lived to face the crisis! Nothing from the teaching had become concrete enough to sweep away the sudden downpour of problems.

Was there something wrong with the teaching?

“There lived a rich landlord who had one son. His son was a heavy spendthrift and didn’t know the value of money. After his father died, the spendthrift son soon spent all of his father’s money. There was nothing left. Even the money his father had kept aside as savings was all gone. The son soon realised that no relatives stood by him in this dire circumstance.

He decided to leave the city. What remained of his father’s legacy was only one very expensive shawl, which the son used to cover himself.

Feeling unbearable hunger and suffering he, for the first time realised that he must earn himself a livelihood. So, he worked as a labourer. He didn’t even have any chappals in his feet. Since he received a very small pay he went and bought himself a very cheap pair.

He put the Chappals on and walked out of the shop. The ground just outside the shop was covered in wet mud. Instantly his new Chappals got covered in it.

He began cleaning his Chappals with his shawl. Seeing him do this a person asked him, ‘are you foolish to clean these cheap Chappals with this expensive shawl?’

The son looked at him calmly and replied, ‘The shawl my father earned. These Chappals I earned!’”

Surely, one is left thoroughly defeated. At the end of exhaustive efforts, nothing had transformed! And all there was left was the feeling of being deceived and troubled by our lingering nagging hollowness. One can’t help but wonder about the flaw? What went wrong? How do we so quickly end up completely filled with hollowness and unhappiness the moment something goes wrong in our life?

Another vital question that needs an answer is - where did all the organised steps taken so far suddenly disappear in the time of need? Why didn’t the teaching work and how did we fall to the bottom?

Had we ever, until now, honestly verified whether there has been any movement?

Actually, life answers!

In pinpointing spirituality as an excluded goal, what we actually excluded was our own existential life! Whenever we pinpoint to one single goal, we are looking away from the rest of our life.

Existential life and spirituality are two sides of the same coin - inseparable and un-excludable from each other!

Any effort to separate them ultimately results in a strong and disharmonious rebound; a rebound of circumstances, pointing to precisely what we tried to exclude and neglect! And this approach of highlighting one and sweeping the rest under the carpet hasn't just recently come up in us. It has been our insensitive ruling approach over a long long period of time.

In the good old school days... it was the hour for English literature - poems by Wordsworth. We studied his poems on Nature, while seated in a closed four-walled room!!

Did no one want to take us outdoors to see the greenery of trees, flowers or even the green grass growing around the school itself to evoke the Wordsworth hidden within all of us?

This is an excluding approach. It didn't allow the simple faculty of spontaneity to be introduced into us. Referring to the above example we can say that 'spontaneity' would reflect as the natural adoration of beauty and nature as well as the spontaneous knowing of the poetic quality of Wordsworth's heart.

An excluding approach can really destroy the heart of spontaneity!

The excluding approach used by mankind has not only altered and disfigured the indigenous healing methods and its implementations at the individual level but at collective levels as well.

In the ancient Indian medicinal system, living was seen as a unitary movement. No instruments were needed to diagnose a disease. The human functionality itself was used as the diagnostic instrument. For instance, they used the pulse to diagnose each and every ailment. Every pulse movement was identified with different movements of animals, like the movements of snakes, jumping of frogs, peacock-walks etc.

But now we entirely depend on external instruments for the diagnosis of any problem in the living body. These devices identify problems based on its specifically designed purpose - a narrow and pinpointing mode. These devices are not equipped to find the root cause of disorders or diseases as it excludes all other functions of the body and isolates the problem. Likewise, the cure is also narrowed down to that isolated area. Most often, this proves to be a pseudo cure. The very approach of localised diagnosis limits the possibilities of completely healing from any disease. Contrastingly, Indian medicines consider the problem in a functional and dynamic way rather than as static and isolated.

This sweeping change from then and now happened as we lost our in depth familiarity with Nature. Before this change, life was approached and lived in

an un-fragmented wholeness, coming from a complete unified participation of all.

The very first teaching in the Siddha system of healing says, *'If you severely suffer from a disease, look around; there will be a plant growing nearby, waiting to heal you. Nature knows you and provides for you!'*

I myself have seen certain plants miraculously appear in areas they are not known to ordinarily grow in. It was later I learnt that the person living in that house had been suffering from a disease that this plant was known to cure it.

Several times, I have witnessed and know without doubt how well Nature knows us and She never betrays us. But we, we continue to live in concrete jungles feeling proud of the concrete progress we make in the world!

This intelligence of Nature shines only where lives co-exist with Her in love and respect. Her intelligence cares, not only at an individual level but also at a collective level. The Neem tree flourishes in its utmost green and Palm trees yield fruits, in summer time. Inherently both carry natural properties of reducing heat and heat caused imbalances of the body. Likewise, wintertime finds plants that heal diseases arising from the dire influence of the cold. Such as Ocimum Tenuiflorum (Indian holy basil), Leucas Aspera (wild).... Sadly, now plants are in nurseries and animals in zoos.

The Life principle of ancient times was - 'Live by making others live'. Living was mutual. All are participants of life. Now, the life principle seems to be 'live on the destruction of others'.

Man wants only himself to live, even at the expense of others. He destroys natural resources in the name of enhancing his standard of living. Man has turned blind to all co-existing participants of Life. Just as a horse with blinders sees only one single direction while the rest of the view is excluded from his eyes, so does man travel, pointed towards his desires and trampling natural factors; destroying, those very things that enhance and nurture him.

But it shall not be for long as the spontaneity of life cannot be fragmented and naturally arrives forth as a whole. Man has to face the dire consequences of natural calamities way beyond his capacity to control. He is left once more defeated by life.

Our excluding approach reflects in all dimensions of our lives, small and big, fragmenting and neglecting the wholeness. It becomes our life story.

How can one come in touch with ones own nature of wholeness - the fountain of life - by using this kind of a lame approach?



Actually, nothing can get excluded!

Whatever exclusions, happened, happened in our mind, for, everything is inherently related and expressed through the spirit of life. The rebound impression of this long-held approach inculcated a sub-conscious utilitarian mentality or a questioning mentality in us, always gauging what we can get out of something. Deformed by this ingrown approach we find we cannot do anything creatively owing to this stagnant utilitarian mentality. A kind of mentality that is not open to the new or the taking of risks. By clinging to keep our mechanical routine secure we entirely lose out on creativity.

This neurotic utilitarian approach turns us into opportunistic individuals. We calculate and analyse the kind of utility and gain that can come from each and every one. That again navigates us into choosing something fitting and suitable and excluding others. We turn calculative even in our finer relationships - asking what we can get from it. A prolonged affinity to this opportunistic approach finally turns us into pretentious people. We pretend to our children, friends, lover, even to our mother. All our relationships remain skin deep because of our own superficial nature.

In this way Man lives alienated from himself. He, who thought his mission to be exclusive somewhere, and followed specific means for it, actually excluded everything he is - and now finds himself abandoned by his own nature.

Rasa Siddhas, the Alchemists, have beautifully uttered...

“The quintessence of immortality glitters in rotten things.”

The quality of spirituality is hidden in concrete realities!

Repeatedly stung by painful defeat do we emerge?

If not, then now starts a phase of reactive mentality initiated by those who have followed the readily available so-called-spiritual means, marketed since the past one or two decades. Frustrated and lost these people now condemn that no Guru or teacher can impart Truth and they declare spiritual enlightenment to be a myth.

In a way, what they say is true -

A myth can never be grasped by the conceptual mind. It can only be lived.

But on the other hand, their statement of spirituality being a myth is untrue, because what they followed in the name of spirituality was only their mad beliefs!

Investing in one's own projections to be the Truth only leads one into a growing framework of one's pseudo realities, which consequently give way under the spontaneity of Life.

It is common sight! After the painful experience of their pseudo spiritual journey, these people compulsively scorn, criticise and shun the age-old living insights imparted by our compassionate Ancestors. They still do nothing different; they are once again impulsively and reactively constructing yet another conceptual framework.

Recently, several people having gone through this sort of a deceptive experience began to redefine the meaning and significance of day-to-day realities and named their understanding: 'post spiritual - life', while condemning the spiritual realms to be irrelevant and unrewarding.

Yes ofcourse, they went on a journey but their journey was into their own projections - the pseudo spiritual realm. Their common comment and remark is that just as personality development programs for enhancing ones individuality grew irrelevant and outdated over time, spirituality for realising the impersonal will too be in vain. Thinking this, they have already fallen prey to the mentality of over-criticism and of excluding native spirituality; not realising that someday this remark too could turn into another one of their 'irrelevances'. Then, would they move onto another new framework to adhere to?

There was and is nothing wrong in the native spiritual teachings.

The fault has been in our interpretation and projection. Truth is not away from our day-to-day life. Truth is not invisible from concrete realities. It is our hope, acquiring nature and interpretations that projects a 'pseudo spiritual journey' in which we invest all our fantasies.

By asserting one thing, we are already excluding something. We give momentum to the same vicious cycle.

Life is whole. This vicious cycle is not eternal. Someday, Life penetrates through our vicious mode of asserting and excluding and naturally makes us exclude all that we earlier asserted upon, and make place for those exclusions of the past.

"Once a man asked me teasingly, 'Hundreds of commentaries have been written for Bhagwad Gita and Padanjali's Yoga Sutras. Initially I found them very interesting but now I don't feel much hope or significance in it.'

I said, 'Yes, it is true! There is no significance in reading the commentaries.'

I asked him, 'Have you attended the workshops too?'

He said, 'Yes, some of the Bhagwad Gita teachings in relation to attaining excellence in ones job performance'.

Then I asked, 'At any time in your life have you been under the compulsion of not only fighting with your relatives and Guru, but killing them?'

He simply stared. I continued, 'Surely you are not familiar with such a crisis? Can you imagine how tremendous a crisis such as this would be? Arjuna was in this very crisis. Bhagwad Gita is for him!'

You may have thought you have asked a meaningful question in the workshop you attended, but the question has not come from your own existential crisis. Instead, it has come from your intellectual crisis. Actually, it is not right to call it an intellectual crisis. Correctly speaking it is your intellectual itch. Even if Lord Krishna were to appear before you, would you ask him questions about the Bhagwad Gita and not about your own existing problems? Would you even show your love and adoration for your beloved Lord? We made God into a Philosopher or consultant cum counsellor!'

He left the place."

This projection of making spirituality an exclusive goal is not happening only today in the modern world. You may wonder in what way is the ancient Siddha path related to this so-called New Age mentality. It was prevalent even in those days in forms of searching for the other world, Heaven; or as, God seated somewhere in some world waiting to be found etc.

The Siddhas have mocked at this excluding and separative approach of attaining and controlling this 'other world'. Nowadays the same mentality yet walks around wearing words like transformation, sustained transcendence, altered consciousness... etc.

So, only after recognising the failure of our projected formulae for life does one question if there is a way to emerge from this acquiring role, conceptual play and world of personal interpretation?

I recall a story here.

"Once, a famous and popular historian published many books on the history of people and events. He would sincerely gather chronological data, sometimes even visiting actual places to collect genuine data. Once he decided to write six comprehensive volumes on history. The readers were eagerly awaiting these volumes. The author felt it would take him three years to write these six volumes. In one and a half years he finished three volumes. Facing difficulties in the details of hierarchy in the data of the fourth volume he decided to visit the concerned place, which happened to be in the neighbouring country.

The author would go for a daily morning walk. The next morning as usual he set out. While walking he saw a man fallen dead on the side of the road. There stood two or three people around the dead body. The author approached them. Looking at the dead man, the author felt he may have died not even half hour ago. Just as he had this thought one of the men standing there said, 'I know this man, he, drinks a lot of alcohol. He may have consumed it in excess and died.' Another man said, 'Somebody may have beaten him to death.'

The author listened quietly to the remarks. As the crowd increased, the author left and quietly continued his walk. On returning on the same path, he saw many more people surrounding the dead body, speaking amongst them, 'This man was severely ill and suffered a heart attack.' Another man said, 'He had many business problems, his partner may have poisoned him at some party last evening.'

Hearing all this something hit the author deep in his heart. He thought, 'this man died less than two hours ago. Even with many opinions and information about his death floating around there was no decision or finality about it. People had already projected so many interpretations of this incident. This simple single incident had become an event! How foolish it is to write about history. History of something that is past!'

Reaching home, he immediately burned the three volumes he had written and decided not to continue the foolishness of writing the projections of others. Seeing him burn his work, his wife feared he had turned mad. She asked, 'Have you gone crazy?' The author glanced at her but didn't reply. Thinking his behaviour extremely strange, she left the room.

The author thought, 'I wonder if my wife will project this simple act of burning papers and make it into an event!'

In order to escape we have to question whether this conceptual framework has any substantial reality. But never, no way! We cannot escape it! Because, this interpretational world is totally conceptual. It is in itself non-existent. So how can we escape from that which does not even exist? If somebody presents you a means to escape from it, it is a guaranteed addition to your list of acquisitions!

And, neither do we need to neglect anything for spirituality. If dropping is necessary, it can happen by life's humble movement. But our projection or fixation to anything can get us stuck in it.

With no success guaranteed formulae in hand to rebuild our shattered conceptual world we once again, come face to face with our anxiety, our hollowness. Unable to turn away, we see the true face of our hollowness to

be nothing but our own fear of non-existence - without these projections we are not going to be as we are. This is the fear; the root navigating cause in this substituting framework.

This is the seed of fear triggering the pseudo spiritual journey. So, only when we understand the non-existence of our conceptual world does it drop and bring forth our inherent potential to live in this hollowness. Now the only difference is that it is no more hollowness. It opens, as the doorway to the existence of flowing Life; a self-unfolding flow of Life; it is the doorway to the dimensionless existentially flowing Life.

Life cannot be stripped by projections; 'She' strips projections. She unravels Herself!

Life has Her own pregnant vitality unleashing by Her very ongoing movement.

If we call this vitality 'still' then living is dynamic!

Both co-exist. To say it correctly - there is no difference between them. It is non-dual. Life is always moving forth! And we are the embodied nature of this moving life. It just goes; in that way, it 'is'. By its ongoing movement, change happens on its own accord. There is change inherent in it, just as a river flows its course without fear of change. If it fears it stagnates, with no life in it!

With neither a need for practice nor any need to exclude anything, Life is expressing truth each and every moment to each of us. If we are in the flow of how it wishes to express through us then howsoever we are needed to act, we do. If it chooses to have us close our eyes and be seated in order for it to express its finer aspects, then we just sit and be – for an onlooker this is interpreted as Meditation.



The multi-facets of life's manifestations such as love and compassion have turned alien to ourselves. Nowadays, people take to 'practicing' these natural qualities of life in the form of exclusive practices! Separate from their moment-to-moment expression. Nowadays in Buddhist lore, people *practice compassion* as a Metta.

Siddha Saint Ramalingam, who attained the immortal light body, a unique transformation in the Siddha path, recommended and showed the way to Truth as

'Jiva Karunyame Moksha Thiruku Thiravukol',

'The key to liberation is compassion to all living beings'.

He explains the nature of hunger and how it overrides all other wants and intellectual hungers. By this, he recommended giving food to the hungry. It

opens and enhances a natural response inherent in every human being arising as compassion. He could have spoken of complicated practices or urged us to lead an intense austere life but instead he simply mentions the basic human nature to be verily enough to live as Truth!

But, I have seen many of his followers make this into their *'practice'*! When I say *'practice'* it is to indicate a mechanical nature. When one visits the Sangha or community of the followers of Siddha Saint Ramalingam, they compel you to have a meal. There is no consideration to whether you are hungry or not; whether you are in need of food or not. They do it as a practice; they serve food with the sole intention of attaining liberation! This nature of obsessive intention itself deviates one from the original native teaching of compassion! They have simply not understood, *'compassion is a spontaneous response'*. It is not a virtue to be adhered to; nor is it an ethical garb to be worn; nor is it a pedestal to be stood on to show off and neither can it serve as a curtain to hide ones inherent feelings, such as veiling anger under the pretence of compassion.

When we are ready to lose ourselves as a spontaneous response, for another, without an ounce of expectation, then it is this wholesome loss of ourselves, in return for nothing and as a mere response of our own nature, which is true compassion.



Every word has its own purpose of expression. Every feeling and experience uses its own words to communicate. But often, unaware of this we use spiritual terminologies quite casually and irrelevantly. After which we feel the need to find other new words to invalidate and corrupt. Many of these newer, upcoming words are found in new age spiritual books. Bored by earlier ones, we brought in some new ones. Once again, boredom indicates the repeated mechanical use of an intellectual and mental approach that is devoid of any link to the core.

A journey on an *excluding approach* is long and draining. Whether it is applied to worldly circumstances or used as spiritual materialism, either way, this mentality has already spread from an individualistic level to a collective stand, harshly discarding the wholistic nature of Life. Our societies stand on such excluding approaches! And individually, each one of us suffers the consequences of this attitude on a day to day basis. It reflects in every dimension of our day-to-day living and has led us to keep playing out projection after projection - assuming it will deliver us to happiness someday!

Why do we continue to fool ourselves?

The true attitude Man misses is the understanding of what has already been given. What he thinks he knows is different from what actually is.

What is happening through him?

Life manifests every moment as obvious natural responses of love, compassion and so on. When we fail to be simple, sensitive and attentive towards our innate relationship with these obvious responses that manifest from us, how is one to be attentive to the other deeper and hidden aspects of life, such as deep sleep, waking state, dreaming etc... these are happening to every body everywhere and everyday!



SO-CALLED REBELS

Nowadays there is a lot of importance laid on 'here and now'; another humorous ongoing sale. Life is always moving ahead and whatever occurs is only and always in the Grand Eternal Now. This eternal Now is a stated fact. But if we insist it turns static. A planned approach to live in the Now, itself makes it past, because we are projecting our organised plan as 'Now'. Every moment Life moves ahead because of its openness and humbleness!

Most Ancient Systems have undergone change over time. Some are now as Neo Vedanta, Neo Tantra and, Neo Buddhism etc. The way or mode these systems use to impart or present their teachings is more format-like or in workshop form, boardroom teachings, seminars and strangely enough even as correspondence courses.

Quite obviously, this entire altered approach influences even the spread of Teachings. A big running joke is that courses actually claiming authority to endorse you with different levels of certified enlightenment! And an even bigger joke is some establishments conducting teacher level courses, in the Subject of Truth, which proclaim to prepare an individual to teach Enlightenment around the world. I have even seen westerners initially assume the role of a tourist guide, and bring a group of people to various spiritual spots in India and sooner or later portray themselves to be Gurus, Satsang teachers or even enlightened persons.



I wish to bring to light another issue. It is about how we all want change - we want new and colourful things even in our interpretations and in our explanations of Spirituality.

For instance, the books written in the 1970's and 1980's hold tremendous insights about the 'unconscious, subconscious mind'. People found it exhilarating and welcomed it hoping this may show the right path to ones true nature. The writers dealing with these words, explanations and the people of workshops/seminars were taken to be imparters of Truth!

But, after the 80's, we see books using words like Consciousness, Holistic Mind and Enlightenment etc. Yet, both are dealing with the very same human mind! The new books rendered the older ones outdated. But, the Mind is still the same and the subconscious nature still prevails...!

We have seen the arrival of many different spiritual theories, vocabularies, practices or traditions. Suffocated by this multitude, the new bestsellers and writers simply redefine existing insights using a lighter approach. Many writers even contempt and invalidate past spiritual approaches, stating them irrelevant to day-to-day life.

In our boredom, we really strangle existing solutions and then wait for new ones or begin to redefine the existing ones with a fresh vocabulary.

The fault lies in our approach and not in the original system itself.

The Buddha is the first well-known revolutionary in spiritual history. Yes, he dropped all prevailing spiritual teachings, as it felt invalid for him. But after enlightenment, he followed a Sanyasa system, initiating many into monkhood. He used the word Damma, denoting Dharma of the Hindu spiritual system that was prevalent in his time. Damma is Dharma in Poli language. He revealed the breathing practice, Vipasana, which was also a part of prevalent teachings. His approach may have been different or he may even have been a revolutionary against the prevalent teachers of his period, but not the Truth. After the Buddha, there has been no revolutionary of his kind.

In recent days, I have heard of so-called rebellious teachers who show contempt towards native spiritual insights and towards Masters and their native spiritual roots. The insights of Truth they themselves proclaim is no different from the contempt they throw. This is all they have to share as teachings!

Knowing or hearing their life stories one can easily see their pseudo spiritual journey may have started on a ground of borrowed questions - which they name as their quest for Truth. Quite ironically, they proclaim a quest for Truth as unnecessary and that no teaching leads to Truth. Listening to their impulsive and rash words may even please and ease the ears of some, but we must remember, their very first steps in the journey of Truth have been a borrowed imitation - nothing more than a mind game.

Considering this, their quest hasn't begun as a natural burst from their 'own' existential situation. Lacking this natural burst, their apparent efforts only channelised them towards fulfilling projected ideas. Of course, they grew weary in their journey, as they couldn't find meaning in any of the teachings. And the lack of finding a meaning to ones core existence led everything to end as an overload - turning it meaningless.

Their root feeling of contempt is because even after studying under many teachers and practicing many methods, nothing gave any meaning even to

their simple living. It is true. Their imitative minds and lurking expectations of fixed experience didn't allow a true living experience to flower in them. Their very first step began against the flow of Life, un-truthful to their existential situation.

Earlier, we saw how the quest of realised persons had burst forth from their existential crisis; they didn't ask any questions related to spiritual realms, as they were entirely innocent to this dimension. There are many such evidences in the life sketches of our revered Saints. Reading them sheds true light on the genuinity of the words spoken above.

Seekers need to find the right person to guide them and must embark with the right approach. None of the spiritual traditions, cults or the teachings is ever invalid.

An interpretation can change and the interpreter can also change, but the interpreted is always one.

Teachers really care for us?

“Gooseberry heard that an Indian Swamiji had come to town, a Swami by the name of Strawberry. Gooseberry wished to meet Swami Strawberry, so he enrolled for a workshop conducted by Swami Strawberry. It was a small workshop, a group of four. Gooseberry decided he would be extremely polite and honest with the Swami.

The workshop began. Swamiji began by speaking about Life.

‘Life is constantly growing. Life has many stages in it and these stages depend on objectives. Objectives vary according to the age of a person’, he said.

Swamiji drew a table with 3 columns and titled them - Time, Stage and Object. He explained that each one of them would have to fill a particular year in the Time column; in the Stage column they should write the corresponding life position they had been in at that time and year, and in the Object column, they should write their objective. Each one would have to fill all the three columns starting from the past ten years of his life up to the current year. In this way, after reading each ones tabulated life sketches, Swamiji would assess their growth in life.

It was Gooseberry's turn to fill the table. Gooseberry was an idle but innocent young man. Since he had decided to be truthful to his teacher, he went to the board, picked up the chalk and wrote on the left side of the titles written by Swamiji, ‘No, No, No’.

The board now read, ‘No time, No stage, No object’!

Gooseberry turned to Swamiji. Slightly irritated, Swamiji asked, 'How is it possible?'

Feeling guilt and fearing an adverse reaction because so far he had achieved nothing in life, Gooseberry suddenly decided to show that he had achieved at least a little. Something is better than absolutely nothing. After all, he did want to please Swamiji, not displease him. So, he immediately turned back to the board and struck out the 'No's he had written. And on the right side of the titles written by Swamiji, wrote, 'Less, Less, Less'.

The board now read, 'Time less, Stage less, object less'.

Once again Gooseberry turned towards Swamiji and saw Swamiji had fallen off his chair!"

Teachings the so-called teachers of today present eventually turn into a joke, as seen in the above instance. The teachers are not only insensitive to the vulnerable hearts of the seekers but are also overly aggressive in imposing upon them what they claim to know. Neither do they discriminate nor do they pay attention to whether what is being said is truly of any relevance or significance to the seekers day to day life. This is especially common in Indian and Tibetan teachers conducting workshops and courses. The majority of what they speak is filled with their native spiritual terminology, which is entirely alien to people of other walks of life. For them it is spiritual jargon of no actual relevance to the core of their life. These sorts of teachers tend to hide behind their terminology only because they lack something existentially worthwhile to impart.

Another common imposition suffered by recent seekers comes as part of the teaching - the practice of worshipping local Indian or Tibetan deities. These kinds of sacred worships are suitable to a few rare people who have the required archetype. It is not everyone's cup of tea. Releasing careless and common prescriptions of worshipping these deities clearly shows the teachers themselves are unaware of the entire Truth and significance of these sacred practices. Moreover, the casual overuse of native spiritual words also shows their ignorance of the innate power in these words.

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi lived his whole life on the holy hill Arunachala. When we read what he has to say we find his words are simple and existential. From all his utterances, it is impossible to differentiate spirituality and Life.

Saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa narrated simple parables explaining even the most complex spiritual dimensions in a way even a layperson easily gets the message.

Quite contrary to this is a small incident highlighting how foolishly some teachers prescribe practices to their seekers.

“Amrish is a dedicated spiritual seeker. For the past ten years, Amrish has been devotedly performing many spiritual practices. He came to me with a complaint. Since the past three years he had been suffering from constant allergy; a running nose, recurrent sneezing, red rashes of the skin and itching. He had tried many different treatments, both allopathic and herbal but nothing had brought relief.

I enquired about his daily routine. I found he was intensely practicing many traditional breathing techniques. I knew he wouldn't co-operate if I asked him to stop these practices. So, I recommended several different strong medicines to be taken at frequent intervals for one week.

When he came to me the next week, he said, ‘Nothing worked’. He was suffering from severe itching at that time. I told him, ‘There is only one chance or hope for some relief from all this. Stop all medicines and stop all practices for one week.’

He came back the next week, ‘Surprisingly, the running nose and sneezing have moderately reduced. How did it happen?’ he asked.

Instead I asked him a question, ‘All ancient works say Pranayam practitioners never fall ill. But how is it that you are ill?’ He didn't reply. I continued, ‘Practices like Kapala Pathi (skull shining breath) purify the body by strongly eliminating all toxins. Because of intense practice, your body has become pure. But you are not living in ancient society. You live in a highly polluted society. That is why your body repels everything as an allergy. The only way is for you to either live in a forest or if you wish to live in this society you must pursue appropriate and moderate practices.’

Actually, his teacher had instructed him to practice for many hours and follow a natural diet. It was hard for me to break this conditioning as he had learnt it from his teacher. But, I did explain to him, ‘Because of your restricted way of life your immunity has been fixated. The range of your immune flexibility needs to be lengthened. For that you will have to gradually come into the world of dust and ordinary food. Come out of your puritan perspective.’”

Many simple practices pose danger for a seeker if they turn incompatible to the environment outside or prove strenuous to his natural constitution. Many western people behave crazy after practicing certain abnormal methods or techniques that are actually not relevant to them.

Practices, which remain mere practices and don't enter into your very flesh and blood, will undoubtedly turn into stress-stimulating factors and create a sense of alienation. This is true because we already know something given to you can become personal only by you finding meaning in it.

The practice that stays valid right to your day-to-day life will not and cannot remain a mere practice but will turn into a 'life-shaping source'.

I have seen certain teachers add another imposition upon a seeker. He, sometimes, forcibly pushes the seeker into radically changing his current lifestyle. Things like forcible renunciation, or initiating him into monkhood etc. For some western seekers these kind of extreme measures could really prove adverse, as they would undergo a cultural shock. It is by no means beneficial in their Sadhana or spiritual journey. For instance, a mendicant's life or sadhu's life is very alien to the western cultural roots and up-bringing. So if someone, is forcibly made to follow this kind of a path they would only end up suppressing themselves. Sometimes, we find such cases in ashrams. Or certain women seekers appear pale and anaemic. This easily reflects their forcible dispassion.

Being a Master carries a far greater responsibility than that of even a parent. The role of a Master calls for a tender caring approach as the master-seeker relationship strengthens on sensitivity and genuinity. This is very rare to find in today's world.



THE BLIND AND THE BLIND...

*"They howl, like dogs in gallows,
Peck like vultures, those of false wisdom,
But, those of true Siva wisdom; dead to the world
Though living in body and senses."*

Thirumanthiram Verse 1671

The way several present day teachers choose to establish their own place is by announcing or by making a self-proclamation of themselves as Gurus. In this way, they begin to impart their so-called teachings. This is nothing but the projection of Ego.

*"Having known the One, That knows him,
Then, who is there to know oneself."*

Awai Kural Verse 5, chapter two

Such teachers in India as well as abroad portray themselves to be in the natural state of Gnana - i.e. Sahaja Samadhi! The people who benefit from

them are ones who get introduced to some simple practices or techniques. Some may even have an awakening of some ethical messages or truths. There is nothing wrong if they are able to help others in a simple sense. The problem arises when the teachers pose as Realised Gnanis. They conduct their lifestyle like that of a being in the Sahaja state of the Self. Most people, out of naivety may even believe and accept these people to be sharing a kind of Ultimate experience of the natural state of Truth, by their sheer vicinity.

*“The ignorant say bliss bliss!
None know the dance of bliss,
Having realised the dance of bliss
Where the me ends, there bliss.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse 2796

To educate some naïve readers and help them discriminate for themselves the genuinity of a Teacher whom they may encounter in the social world today and to avoid being misled, let us now speak of the different states of Truth that one can be established in.

When Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi was asked by Veera Subbaiya Swami, the head of the Math (monastery), about how one gets established in the natural state of Sahaja Samadhi, he replied saying,

‘The Satvidha Samadhi (six types of Samadhi) includes both, the Savikalpa Samadhi and the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. And when both these states of Samadhi are established it will lead to the Sahaja Samadhi.’

Savikalpa Samadhi is attained by a certain conscious and continuous effort on the part of the person, whereas Nirvikalpa Samadhi flourishes effortlessly. Therefore, Savikalpa Samadhi is called the ‘seed Samadhi’ and Nirvikalpa Samadhi is the ‘seedless Samadhi’.

*“Bereft of imagination, ascending the way of fire,
Seeking the vast light, the sculptor of created all
Reaching the mystic moon in union, becoming one
with the unborn self,
That, in soothe, is Samadhi’s tranquillity.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse-628

When Keval Nirvikalpa Samadhi (Keval means spontaneous) occurs, the person drops effortlessly into the Self and there is no apparent external movement towards the world. As the Keval Nirvikalpa Samadhi establishes, it leads to the Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi and the Gnani in the Sahaja state can enact and make himself available to the onlookers as a normal being.

'At the young age of sixteen, Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi had his first death experience and realised Himself. After this, he moved to the Holy Hill, Arunachala. He wouldn't speak so frequently and nor would he reveal many teachings. Thereafter he had another death experience at Tortoise Rock in the year 1914. Only in his later years did he go on to reveal teachings.'

Two people, Vasudeva Sastri and Palani Swami, who were around him at the time of this particular death experience witnessed Bhagwan's body completely experiencing death, including the colour of his skin turning blue. It was not a mere psychological death experience but death even at the physical level.

Bhagwan's description of his own experience says that a pulsating energy suddenly emerged from the right side of his chest and moved to the left side. Only after that did he open his eyes.

After this extremely significant happening, Bhagwan Ramana began to speak with people, share his teachings and accepted all who came to him for guidance.'

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi and Ramakrishna Paramahansa, both say, the one to play the role of the Sat Guru is preordained by Divine Will. So usually, Gnanis who attain the Nirvikalpa Samadhi state, either remain in this state until their Prarabdha Karma exhausts itself or they leave their body while in Nirvikalpa Samadhi when they have nothing in the world to remain in it for.

The state of Sahaja Samadhi; the state of living in the natural state of the Self, in the phenomenal world has emancipated in a very few and rare Gnanis; only those ones who have been specially blessed by divine ordinance to play the role of the Sat Guru even without proclaiming themselves as Gurus or Gnanis. The ones who flourish in the Sahaja state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi are chosen entirely by Grace according to the presence of true and genuine seekers in the world earnestly praying for guidance and to be brought to Truth in that time.

Even in the state of Sahaja Samadhi the mind may still survive as a very subtle enjoyer; a subtle enjoyer of the bliss, in order to keep the body alive. This single subtle tendency gets burned when these Gnanis leave their bodies. This is usually known as Videha Mukthi.

For a Gnani to still be in the body while in the state of Videha Mukthi is very rare as it is even beyond the state of Sahaja Samadhi.

Bhagwan Ramana lived in this state and revealed it as 'Ajadam', which in Truth cannot even be described as a state, so is better said as the 'indescribable'.

Muruganar, a Gnani himself, mentions this. Muruganar was called the shadow of Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi and was a very near and dear devotee of his. In one of his songs in his work Guru Vasaka Kovai he says...

*“To meet the needs of various seekers,
Guru Ramana did expound,
Various doctrines. But, I have,
Heard Him say that His true teaching,
Firmly based on His own experience, is Ajada.”*

Verse 100

(Ajada - no birth; unborn; the ever Immutable Self; birth, death and the world process never occurred)

In the 40 Verses, Bhagwan himself speaks of the ever-existing nature of Ajada.

Devotees, who lived with Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi, would find him sitting motionless, with his eyes open for a long time. In those days devotees could only refer to him as ‘it’, as they were unable to attribute any human or gender description.

*“When Maya veileth Jiva, the Truth by Vedas remaineth hidden;
When Maya leaveth, that Truth of Himself revealeth;
Those who can make Maya vanish, merge in God,
No more is body, no more is mind.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse 2548

About this indescribable state, many Gnani’s, even Narayan Guru, Kanjankadu Ramdas Swami, who met Bhagwan Ramana, praised him, calling him the giant serpent in the spiritual lineage who comes only once in many centuries.

Once, Bhagwan ironically, said to someone,

“People are coming here saying that they are longing for Enlightenment, (Mukthi), if I show even a glimpse of IT, even a crow and sparrow will run from here. Then only we will have to sit here.”

-Reference: Guru Vasaka Kovai, Sadhu Om commentary.

“In his earlier days, when Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi spent all his time on the Holy Hill of Arunachala a few people would come and sit near him. Bhagwan would merely sit in one place with vacant eyes, looking somewhere yet nowhere. One day, while Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi sat like this near a rock, the person who cooked rice for Bhagwan and the others came and placed the rice pot on that rock.

After some time, Palani Swami, another devotee, happened to glance behind Bhagwan and noticed that the rice pot had tilted and all the steaming hot rice water was pouring down Bhagwan's back. Bhagwan's back was already burnt and scarred. Shocked, Palani swami, looked at Bhagwan, but he saw that Bhagwan was completely normal. He was still staring vacantly, unaffected by what had happened!"

Bhagwan always said, 'we are not the body'; he even often said, 'there is only Self'. The teachings of Bhagwan are seen shining through many of his own life incidents.

We can verily say that his experience of Truth was not separate from his Life.



Just as each flower naturally exudes its own distinctive fragrance, exclusive qualities shine through every enlightened being. This has been written and described as 'Muktha Lakshana' in most ancient spiritual scriptures.

An enlightened person is beyond all states of waking, dreaming and sleeping... Since He finds himself in all these states, he transcends them. As for us, we are still grabbed by these states. For instance, we don't know what time we would sleep tonight or what we would dream. These states are true yardsticks that betray any fakes, no matter how they may pose themselves as.

There are some points I would like to offer to present day teachers for self-verification. Some teachers, mostly from Advaitic lore, are truly good at heart with a keen interest in helping people. But, I would like to highlight a common pitfall along the way - one that can be genuinely questioned, without compromise.

They often say things like 'I finished', 'I experienced self-realisation', or something like, 'What is there to finish? I am already as the Self... and so on. We cannot deny them their experience but what is to be clarified here is that what they have experienced... is a total whole of their waking state of consciousness. Let me explain through an example.

We normally wouldn't pay much attention to the silence that pervades the room we are sitting in. We hear the large and deafening noise of an airplane, passing overhead. After the plane has passed, we suddenly become aware of a large silence enveloping the room and our surroundings. You may have already experienced something like this before.

This silence is not new, nor has it just come from somewhere outside. The existent silence has always been pervading the room. Only, we have just become aware of it through a relative experience.

Similarly, we remain fragmented and scattered strongly identifying with the chaotic world and are unable to experience the subjective nature of our own waking state consciousness. But, in his inner quest, when a person plunges into himself by de-identifying or disengaging from all objective orientation he then has the overwhelming experience of his waking state consciousness enveloping him.

The experience of encountering our self as whole and integrated (not scattered and fragmented into the objective) in our waking state of consciousness has its own associated Satvic qualities of silence, grounding etc. But, often, our mind once again deceives us; we believe ourselves to have attained enlightenment - the Ultimate state of the Self.

These states can be verified. They can and will get swept away by our other states like sleep, dreaming etc. (Susupthi, Swapna).

An enlightened person is beyond all states.

We see here another life incident in the life of Shirdi Sai Baba, the Great Divine Beggar, and Fakir.

“In his earlier years, Baba slept on a wooden plank, four arms in length and only a span in breadth, with earthen lamps burning at its four corners, hanging from the roof, eight feet above the floor. Later, he broke the plank into pieces and threw it away. Once, Baba was describing the significance of the plank to Kaka Sahib. On hearing it, Kaka Sahib said to Baba, ‘if you still love the wooden plank, I will hang one up in the Masjid for you to sleep at ease.’ To this, Baba replied, ‘I wouldn’t like to sleep up on a plank and leave Mhalsapati down on the ground.’

‘Then I will provide another plank for Mhalsapati too,’ said Kaka Sahib.

To this, Baba replied, ‘How can he sleep on the plank? It is not easy to sleep on a plank. Only he who can sleep with his eyes wide open can do that. When I go to sleep, I often ask Mhalsapati to sit beside me, place his hand on my heart and watch the chanting of the Lords name. He can’t do even this. He himself gets drowsy and begins to nod his head. When I feel his hand heavy as a stone on my heart, I cry out, ‘Oh, Bhagat’, after which he moves and opens his eyes. So how can he, who cant sit or sleep well on the ground, whose posture is not steady and who is a slave to sleep, can sleep high up on a plank?’”

Most perceive this incident as a great feat or miracle by Baba, but actually, it is the mere Truth of the natural state of Self and can be seen and recognised as a quality of an enlightened Sage.

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi has mentioned below in his own words all that has been described so far. (Found in Collected Works of Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi)

“One becomes unaware of oneself and what one is doing and ones mind gets absorbed in the Self. The subtle state in which even the pulsation subsides is the state of Samadhi.

Mind will be cleared of its impurities only by a desireless performance of duties during several births, getting a worthy Master, learning from him and incessantly practicing meditation on the Supreme. The transformation of the mind into the world of inert matter due to the quality of darkness (Tamas) and its restlessness due to the quality of activity (Rajas) will cease. Then the mind regains its subtlety and composure. The Bliss of the Self can manifest only in a mind rendered subtle and steady by assiduous meditation. He who experiences that Bliss is liberated even while still alive.

When the mind is divested of the qualities of darkness and activity by constant meditation, the Bliss of the Self will clearly manifest within the subtle mind. Yogis gain omniscience by means of such mind-expanse. He alone who has achieved such subtlety of mind and has gained Realisation of the Self is liberated while still alive. The same state has been described in the Rama Gita as the Brahmam beyond attributes - the One universal undifferentiated Spirit. He who has attained the unbroken eternal state beyond even that, transcending mind and speech, is called ‘Videha Mukta’, that is, when even the aforesaid subtle mind is destroyed, the experience of Bliss as such also ceases. He is drowned and dissolved in the fathomless ocean of Bliss and is unaware of anything apart. This is Videha Mukti. There is nothing beyond it. It is the end of all.

As one continues to abide as the Self, the experience ‘I am the Spirit’ grows and becomes natural. The restlessness of the mind and the thought of the world in due course become extinct. Because experience is not possible without the mind, Realisation takes place with the subtle mind. Since Videha Mukti connotes the entire dissolution of even the subtle mind, this state is beyond experience. It is the transcendental state...”

(This subtle mind, Bhagwan Ramana called Aham Spurana and it is called as Virrithi Gnana in Vedantic lore.)



Today, many Satsang teachers of Advaitic lore pose as Gnanis or realised persons etc and impart teachings by mere glances, claiming to be in the state

of Ultimate Silence. Moreover, they award certificates of enlightenment after using these means. Under this role, they expose and exhibit their power-oriented approaches and satisfy their personal perverted tendencies, excusing their acts to be of those of Grace, coming from their so-called natural state!

They say,

“I am not the doer. It is this body that is moving and doing”... declaring themselves to be ever abiding in the natural state of Self. Based on this they choose to attribute all their activities, including the folly's committed and the consequences triggered through their body and mind as a result and expression of the Ultimate Self they claim to be in!

Once again, here are some words spoken by Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi about this very nature of pitfall in ones mind.

“Can the mind which is fixed in its original state possess and ego-sense or have any problem to solve? Do not such thoughts arise due to past tendencies? Not only should the mind be curbed and turned back to its true state but also it should be made to remain unconcerned and indifferent to external happenings. Is it not due to Self - forgetfulness that such thoughts arise and cause more and more misery? Though the discriminating thought, ‘I am not the doer, all actions are merely the reactions of the body, senses and mind’, is an aid for turning the mind back to its primal state, nevertheless it is still a thought’, but one which is necessary for those minds which are addicted to much thinking. On the other hand can the mind, fixed unswervingly in the divine self and remaining unaffected even while engaged in activities, give in to such thoughts as ‘I am the body. I am engaged in work’, or again to the discriminating thought, ‘I am not the doer, these actions are merely reactions of the body, senses and mind?’”



Interestingly, these sorts of fakes lived even in ancient times. Siddha Tirumoolar in his work Thirumanthiram holds kinds of these in contempt and teases them by saying a blind man is showing the way to another blind man.

*“The Guru who removes blindness, they seek not,
The Guru who removes-not blindness, they seek;
The blind and The blind, in a blind dance, mingled;
The blind And The blind, in a deep pit, together fell.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse 1680

We have discussed the significant role of a teacher and how it can cause a seeker to miss out in his journey. Realisation of Truth is like the flowering of a

flower bud; for that the flower needs both, water and sunlight as a symbiosis. When the Master of the heart and a seeker with a longing meet, it gives a second birth to the seeker - he becomes 'Dwijā', twice born - the seeker no more, nor the seeking.

Our cultural conditioning has already implanted into us the dual nature of subject and object; mind and body; heart and thought; spiritual and material. Over and above, teachers of these shallow teachings are entirely insensitive to the pain we carry resulting from the splits we suffer within. Studying under such teachers could immerse us into more misery, anger, depression, pain, defeat, resentment, struggle, a loss of personal power and the anguish of a meaningless life.

Man already has many problems in his relationship with himself arising from conflicting orientations between his daily life and the surrounding world. An improper teacher could make us even wearier by their 'unlived' theories of enlightenment or transformation and mechanical practices.

Only when we sense that freedom at every level is always a matter of releasing conflicts, fixations and constant overwhelming urges to control life, will we realise their teachings to be mere false hopes and empty fantasies.

A genuine transformation is meaningful only by creatively appropriating the expression of unhindered Life.

In other words, the only possible and unique way already given to man is to respond to the uncompromising presence of life right through his ordinary life. There is hidden magic in all the ordinary and life enchantment in day-to-day activities. Our ordinary life itself is the Pandora's box awaiting to be opened. When Man lives in this treasure chest of fluid intelligence and knows Life, the spontaneous responses that arise will bring a unified living whole.

In this living whole, all conflicts and dualities are nullified. Spontaneity is nothing more than appropriate responses flourishing from the core. And the core is the stable ground where all relationships are ever related. Man is a living whole as he is. Being the way he is, by his spontaneous action he simply asserts his immense presence in the larger whole of his environment. And this environment is nothing but a reflection and extended quality of who and what he is.

'Crisis' is the real teacher Life offers! A true Master always brings about a milieu of crisis. Why? Do you remember how you experienced a need with all of your being to live fully? Life, naked life, stood there - calling!

Life is always calling but we are inert and insensitive. Again and again, we rush to escape from the deepest hollows in our mental shells and prefer to take hold of previously established theories, positions; or we refuse to peel ourselves off from the known. We remain stuck in this progressive numbness.

Falling to inertia deadens all that was most alive in us. In other words, not enough courage was gathered for us to look at how we are, and we believe following safer ideas can transform life. We wait for a miracle to start our journey, our exploration. We like to have pleasant dreams of favourable circumstances or some exceptional encounters or transformed conditions of life. To feed these hopes, we fling ourselves at the stacked files of readymade solutions or at the leftovers of so-called teachers proclaiming enlightenment. We simply turn victims to this doctrinal flea market!

The real Spirit emerges only when we face ourselves, terribly caught under the tyranny of our dreams and stand to face the bitterness of our waking.

Now we understand we have always demanded everything from others, from groups, and have called forth nothing from ourselves. Constantly ignoring our inner faculties has made them impotent. We don't like to give up the so-called possibilities offered by these teachers and keep refusing the calls of our inner possibilities. We find fascination in the lure of lethargic teachings, diluting our spirit away from the self-evident perspective of the essential.

When Nisargathatha Maharaj's Guru told him that you are not your body, it created a tremendous crisis in Nisarga. After this, Nisarga remained secluded in a room for three years.

We name Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi's death experience at the young age of sixteen as his enlightenment. But, even after it, he remained in complete silence for around 2 years. Bhagwan even lost the power of his voice because he completely withdrew all identification with the mode of speech. But he said sometime later that his voice reappeared by itself. Even after he broke his 2-year silence, he refrained from speaking frequently and replied only when necessary. This continued for around 10-12 years after he had realised himself! He would sit idle immersed in himself.

Speaking of his death experience and the time after, Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi said,

"A big elephant has entered into a small hut."

As a stated fact, enlightenment may be instantaneous and not gradual. But the assimilation of this explosive happening takes its time to settle in itself. We see this in the life sketches of Realised persons, how some remained in total silence, some encountered madness, some lived as babies etc. It was all during the settling time. And whatever we have described is all from the onlooker's perspective.

*"If that beginning less, middle less, end less
Supreme Expanse, engulfs
The Truth of non-dual Bliss shall rise.
The entire clan of us will be redeemed,*

*Nothing will be lacking,
All of our undertakings will prosper.
Just as the light of sunrise, in the dawn, reaches;
The mystics emancipated in the dawn of grace, in which
There is neither abundance nor lack.
We can play with them.
If we, be offered heaven and earth
We wont rejoice,
Our nature will be like
Babies, madman, ghouls.”*

Ninai Vonru, Verse - 7, Sage Tayumanavar

This is the missing criterion in the lives of today's so-called teachers proclaiming enlightenment. They simply excuse themselves by stating enlightenment to be instantaneous and refer to a momentary experience as their point of ultimate transformation. But unless and until the living essence does not flower after the incubation period and ooze from every pore and cell, it remains an intellectual experience!

Lately, the teachers say, 'Relax, you are already the eternal awareness.' What are they trying to do? Trying to make you lethargic and grow in numbness? Relaxation is not realisation! Man must be awakened from all such false assumptions of thinking he has already been awakened.

'We are the Self.' 'We are always pure awareness'. No doubt, these are stated facts, but it takes a crisis to shatter mans shadowed side of this recognition. How deeply is he inert to himself? How fallen is he at the mercy of outside affiliations to act upon him in any moment?

“There is real heroism in living immersed in moving in a direction which is truly ones own without an urge for external sanction of these teachers.”

We should drop the addictive tendency of clinging to predictability or an established hypothesis, blocking oneself from living in the *fertile challenge of uncertainty* without any associated conditioning. Knowing beforehand inevitably will be a barrier and we will find nothing new and fresh, other than our own projection.

A true Master wont allow you to relax and instead will make you to encounter yourself; evoke your adventurous spirit and have you dive deep into the crisis that is nothing but 'you'. Man is nothing but a suppressed bundle of inner anxiety and hollowness, to which he likes to remain numb to.

A Master pushes you to face it and shows you that you are already in a crisis - only, you have been persistently ignoring it. This waking-up-to-crisis is the fertile ground where the lotus of unhindered life does sprout and bloom.

By allowing such an internship with a Master, the seeker unbinds himself from mediocre securities, prejudices and grows sensitive to the living whole of himself, where a wide range of possibilities always manifest as a stream of life. But, the price for this? One must stand in that enduring ground to encounter the altering bitter inconsistencies as conflicting fixations of his whole psyche.

By the grace of the true Master, the death of the conceptual psyche happens. When this conflicted ego-self dies a new birth of the completed, unified presence of the self is born. Ego-self is nothing but conflicts, fragmented conditioning and fixations and when it dies to itself, in its origin, its death creates a space for a new kind of self to be reborn. He is now, not limited by narrow perspectives or defences of the ego-self and its conflicts. The difficulties and struggles of everyday life no longer have the same impact as before. There is not even a trace of subtle conflicts in the relationship to the world in this moving presence of living. He realises a living essence has the fluid unity that is neither identical to, nor apart from, all forms of being. This living essence is ones heart, the core. The core itself is all of this whole.



KEY OF THE SIDDHAS

Seekers overlook the simple understanding and the true simplicity of ancient teachings and instead direct their efforts at making everything quick and easy. This 'quick and easy attitude' curbs everything to its superficial level. For seekers today, there is nothing like truly living an internship of imbibing the teachings deep into themselves and their lives.

A genuine internship in the ancient path of the Siddhas calls for an aspirer to be lovingly dedicated throughout his quest. The first time and moment you as a seeker meet a Siddha Master, serves as a complete life changing experience. It is nothing you can ever be prepared for. But, the Master is Great and out of His enriched compassion, He accepts you unconditionally, along with all of your conditioning, just as you are; drowned in ignorance! But, you wont be allowed to remain attached and bound to your conditioning for very long!

From this feeling of acceptance, you feel a natural love and openness flowing towards your Master. And out of His great compassion he bombards you with provoking challenges and creates various situations that work to uproot and bring forth all your rotten conditioning, rooted reactions to life and the inevitable limitations with which you have consistently acquired and defined an idea of yourself through the different phases of your life.

Before He lifts you from this heaving stormy ocean you fear drowning in and makes you transcend, He first firmly makes you go through it by awakening the spirit within you. Only then does he make you transcend it by His grace.

Gradually, He introduces you to a life of inner riches; crystallised and grounded within yourself.

Until this sacred introduction happens and the door opens, we haven't really lived at all. And what we have been calling Life is nothing but a shallow dip in the sea, a superficial and mechanical living; or we are as the Siddhas describe us in their verses, '*walking corpses*', that is, until we learn to Live Authentically!

With all the conditioning we carry, we are no better than walking corpses and only in genuine livingness can we be truly human and humane. The word 'Vaasi' in the Siddha teachings means 'Living', and throughout their teachings they emphasize and urge us towards making our life more 'Alive' and 'Authentic'.



Sixty-four Arts such as music, archery, horse riding and so on, are known to have flourished in ancient Tamil Nadu. These were considered the Divine arts that lead one to walk the path of Truth.

For instance, the simple art called 'Poo Katuthal'. Poo Katuthal is the art of weaving flowers together in garland formations to be offered to Temple Deities or used in festivals for worship. A person wholeheartedly dedicated to this divine activity throughout the year would naturally come to understand the availability of flowers and its changes according to different seasons and so on. Sooner or later, witnessing these changes in his profession in relation to the climate etc develops in him an understanding of the transitory nature. By and by, this understanding would naturally expand further and eventually lead him to witness the transitory nature inherent and present even in all other dimensions of life. From this place within his heart then emerges an urge to find if there is anything that is not transitory...

...A simple whole-hearted act, devotedly and consistently carried out even in a bound realm can uplift one to the next realm and transcend to higher dimensions of life.

Only by living wholeheartedly in one thing can life reveal its 'spiral dimensions of transcendence!'

"The Buddha's early years were of princely lifestyle, filled with prosperity. This was his only known world. He derived all his life nourishment and experiences from the rich environment and world that he saw and believed would last forever. Cocooned in this indulgent world, it was what he knew as his life as well as way of life. This life crystallised in him.

But his experience and crystallised belief of this nourishing world to last forever was shattered when one day he caught sight of: a weak old man, a sick man, a dead body being taken for cremation. These sights belonged to a completely different world!

It was so unbelievable and shocking for him that it swept away the ground crystallised by his life so far. This early crystallisation uprooted, shattered and transformed into a burning question in his mind. It pushed him into embarking on to a solid life-changing quest. The fire of his quest was actually fuelled by his strong crystallisation of earlier years, even though it was illusory in nature.

A solid consistency in his quest came from the anguish of the shattered grounding and the suffering of feeling uprooted. Without allowing any compromises and remaining undecieved by so-called false hopes along the quest, he arrived to completion - at eternal peace within himself."

Any single mode of living, even of mundane and ordinary nature, lived with a single wholehearted attitude consistently, sincerely and by investing all of one's passion in it, holds the potential to transform into ones own vital question for Truth. It has the strength to generate the necessary momentum needed to walk the path of the quest, like in the life of the Buddha. He lived his palatial life from his whole being, wholeheartedly. After it was shaken and he came to question, he did so once again from his whole being, wholeheartedly.

Reading the life-sketches of Great Saints we find the questions they asked at the time of their quest were *existential questions*. The questions were based entirely on the life they lived before they embarked on their quest. They were not borrowed or assumed spiritual questions like the ones we hear nowadays: 'What is Samadhi?' 'What is consciousness', 'What is Kundalini', and 'What is Self?' etc.

In the moment we embark on our quest we don't really know anything about Truth so how can we ask questions related to it? More truthful are those questions that arise from ones own life that may have just been shaken and uprooted by the great compassion of the Master. Or more genuine are the questions we encounter when Nature chooses to awaken us from our sleep in our insincere slumbering ground.

The Buddha's quest came as a burst from an *existential crisis*. An existential crisis demands us to experience completely, by calling forth the whole of our attention, leaving no fragment of our self, untouched.

A crisis cannot be described as a mere random accident come at you from the outside to block your way. A crisis is that great opportunity to be lived. Nature offers us this doorway for us to see our true colours, our true face and our truest potential. But, in the moment of crisis, we deliberately like to avoid

the pain of uncertainty mainly because here, all our known approaches and solutions fail. Entangled in our crisis we feel the severe anxiety of our non-existence and most often choose not to stay with our misery long enough to embrace or understand it. So, using our habitual nature we try to flee, either by denying it, rationalising it or manipulating it by some strategy.

Unfortunately, apart from our panic, our social setup also supports the idea that misery is unwanted and bad!

Undeniably, an existential crisis is strippingly painful but it is also the most authentic situation, because it is you who are entangled in it and it is, you yourself who is the crisis itself. In such a situation you are pushed to be the way you actually are, only because all the pseudo images you carry cannot survive this critical situation. It compels you into being what you are - without impositions, faces or acquisitions. Such a crisis is what preludes the much needed, *'authentic response'*.

To recognise something as False, one would first have to live in it without any prejudice or reserve; completely giving oneself to it, just as it is. One comes to recognise and understand its true nature as being False only by truly living in it.

Coming to understand something as False by its living experience, leads to Truth!

We now come back to what the ancient Siddhas repeatedly emphasize: first *'To Live Authentically in wherever one stands and however one lives'*. After this they ascertain, *'the inherent potential hidden in Authentic Living'*, by the word *'Vaasi'*.

In the ancient Siddha system, the greatest challenge in internship is learning by being and not learning by studying.

Narrated below is an occurrence between Ouspensky and George Gurdjieff, the rascal Saint belonging to the last century.

"Ouspensky, a great scholar, became a student of Gurdjieff. One day he came to his Master and offered his scholarly writings to him. Gurdjieff merely looked at the papers and threw them into a corner of the room. Ouspensky couldn't comprehend the nature of his Master's harsh action. Some months later, he returned, bringing his corrected writings he once again offered them to his Master. But, once again, the Master glanced at them and threw them on the table nonchalantly. Several years passed like this. One day Ouspensky, extremely frustrated asked his Master what was wrong in his writings.

Gurdjieff answered, "Your writings are perfectly logical, everything is correct and rational! But! I couldn't find you in your writings!"

Ouspensky's writings were not of himself or his direct experience, but mere MIND. After his long and deep association with his Master Gurdjieff, Ouspensky became a well-known teacher expounding his Master's teachings."

By this story, I hope having communicated to the readers a strong message: To stop for a moment and examine their life, as, one's life is one's message! Stop and see whether in all the numerous places we dig, do we dig skin deep or do we devotedly dig down all the way to the deepest of depths, because one can dig superficially in many places, but then all would be in vain.

Living wholeheartedly urges an inherent spontaneity to reclaim ones true nature.

The stories and incidents related within the course of the book are not necessarily experiences of exclusive spiritual practitioners. Most are of ordinary individuals, living an ordinary existence with no specific attention on spirituality. I have intentionally shared such common incidents to highlight what the Siddhas have always been expounding:

There is no difference in the spiritual path and our day-to-day existence. The essence of living transcends both descriptions of life, and instead, prevails over.

The insight and understanding of the deeper dimensions of the unknown world that unfold for a spiritual practitioner through his disciplines and practices are no different from existential revelations and grounding that carry an ordinary man through his life.

I would like to share a beautiful story told in ancient Indian Mythology.

There once lived a peasant and his family in a small village, in India. He was a simple man and lived a simple life, caring for his cows and crops. Each morning at the crack of dawn, before taking his cows grazing, the peasant would walk out of his hut and glance up at the sky with folded hands. He would reverentially salute and pray to the Mother and ask Her blessing to make the day ahead peaceful and happy. After this simple prayer, he would busy himself with his cows or his farming work for the rest of the day.

At dusk, he would return. Once again, standing outside his hut he would raise his head to the sky and pray, 'Mother, thank you for your blessings for a beautiful day', and enter his hut.

Close to the peasant's farms and fields there lived a hermit, also in a small hut. He too was a devotee of the Mother Goddess. The hermit would always be immersed in chanting Her mantra or performing Yagnas, praying for Her darshan.

By chance, one day, the peasant's cows wandered off towards the hermit's hut. Standing outside they started 'mooing'. The hermit at that time was busy performing a Yagna. Irrked by the disturbance he angrily chased away the cows and was extremely furious at the peasant for not being more careful. The hermit began scolding him, 'You are not aware of the value of the penance I have undertaken for the Mother. You do nothing, how will you ever receive Her blessings?'

The innocent and god fearing peasant was very upset and sincerely asked the hermits for forgiveness.

Meanwhile, in the celestial realms, the celestial beings approached the Mother goddess and described the penance the hermit was offering Her. They urged Her to grant him a darshan of Her divine form. But, the Mother said, 'Before I go to the hermit, I would like to first give Darshan to another, more deserving devotee'. Curious, the celestial beings asked who the other devotee was.

They couldn't contain their surprise when they heard it was the simple peasant. They argued with the Mother saying that the peasant prayed and remembered Her only twice a day, whereas the Hermit was chanting Her name all through the day.

In reply to their arguments, Mother smiled and said 'I will show you the answer to your question through my divine play'.

So, one day, when the peasant was working with his cows in the fields, the sky suddenly darkened with thick grey clouds. Lightning struck and the resounding voice of the Mother Goddess came booming through the sky, 'O peasant, I will visit your home tomorrow.'

Hearing this the Peasant was overjoyed! He awoke early next day and cooked special food and decorated the house in a festive way. His wife was away at her father's house at this time so he did all of this by himself. And sure enough, the Mother Goddess arrived with her Trident and all. She entered his small hut. Seeing Her and having Her Darshan, the peasant was beside himself with happiness. He welcomed Her to sit on a hammock he had. He himself sat on the ground beside her and swung the hammock.

After sometime, the peasant laid out the food and invited the Mother to eat the food he had so lovingly prepared. He served Her the food caringly. When the Mother had finished eating what the peasant had served, touching Her stomach She said, 'My stomach is full'. But the peasant wouldn't hear of it. He urged her, 'Please eat some more. I have cooked so much for you. My wife is also away.' In this way, he lovingly coaxed her into eating some more.

That evening, the Mother asked, 'Dear peasant, what would you like? Ask me for something.'

But the peasant replied, 'I don't want anything. You have come to my home and eaten the food I have cooked. It has made me very happy. And it would be so nice if you would stay here a few more days.'

But the Mother smiled and said, 'I have to leave soon. There is much work I have to take care of in the world.'

Once again, the Mother gently asked the peasant, 'What would you like? I would like to give you something.'

The peasant replied, 'I already have everything I need, by your blessings. But it would give me great joy to share with the other villagers the joyous news of your visit here to my hut.'

She smiled and disappeared.

The next day, the peasant eagerly and enthusiastically shared his news with all the village people. The hermit also heard the news! He was furious. Instantly he went to the Mother's statue he had and asked Her angrily, 'Why didn't you give me darshan first?'

Once again, the clouds darkened and lightening struck. From far above came a voice, 'O Hermit, the peasant was more deserving of my Darshan because his heart was ready and flowing in contentment, which is an ideal home for divinity to preside. And, his innocence was pulling longingly at my heart, calling me in. And, he doesn't expect anything from me. He is happy, cherishing my presence.'"

This may sound like a children's tale but it shares a deep significance. It clearly illustrates how in the olden days man cherished divinity through simple human qualities!

But nowadays we see practitioners turn victims to their practice by pursuing it blindly or obsessively. The involved underlying factor in most yogic practices is energy, the power. So, when such potent energy practices are followed without an understanding of the true significance and without the much needed right attitude, the practice can turn into an obsession for acquiring energy and holding onto that power. By and by, such an attitude will go on to reflect as a conditioned response in all other dimensions of their life, including their involvement in social activities.

Many of us may have come across teachers affiliated with institutions and establishments and noticed how some of them work with a highly controlling attitude over the disciples and even go to the extent of manipulating their lives. Even places like ashrams are seen to have power games of power politics being played out!

Unless you learn the art of humanising the energy practices and nurturing simple human qualities in a meaningful way, the undigested or unassimilated energy will push and urge you towards destructive activities in life.

If we describe this as a common pitfall or call it the darker side of Yogic lore, then the conditioned attitude propping up in Advaitic practitioners is, the building of a psyche that gets easily repulsed.

Advaitic practitioners who forcibly follow the 'Neti Neti' approach (Not this, Not this) by Kasta Vairagya (forcible dispassion) will inevitably become victims to their own obsessive and forcible renunciation attitude. In due course, anything and everything acts as a trigger for irritation and repulsion. The lack of life is visibly seen on their face.

In other words, the conditioned psyche of Yogic practitioners reflects as a Nemesis; a killjoy approach because of constantly overruling everything around and using a power oriented mode. And the conditioned psyche of Advaitic practitioners reflects as a cynical attitude in relation to his own surroundings and severe denial in relation to the split in personality he suffers.

If any practice is followed mechanically, repeated blindly or forcibly imposed, it will only hang outside of the individual's psyche without being humanised into him, as it lacks any meaning or relevance to his existential life.

When I define the essence of spirituality to be present in our day-to-day existence, I do not mean: place all attention on the material nature of existence, but to place our attention on the situational life we find ourselves in. This unfolds as the authentic source given, for us to find the hidden spirit within.

What appears mundane, monotonous and dull to most is, actually the most Authentic Source we have been given - our existential or current circumstances. Unaware of this we remain confined to this closed circular movement with us; we stay locked inside and face the same kind of obstacles in life year after year. No sooner does the opportunity arrive, we attempt to run. But, most of the time, what we end up doing is only shifting our geographical location or physical avenues because the truth is the fixated circle hasn't really altered at all.

Standing with firm footing, wholeheartedly, in this seemingly confined circle does it unfold! Yes, from that very mundane point, it unfolds and divulges itself to be a 'Spiral Ladder'.

Yes, Life is a spiral Ladder not a confined circle and the momentum of the energy it spirals by arises from the grounding of where we naturally stand and not as commonly misunderstood to descend from higher ends.



We have already discussed well-known Realised persons like Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi and Nisargadutta Maharaj. Recollecting their early lives, Nisargadutta Maharaj was a simple Beedi seller, academically illiterate. And the writings on Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi clearly show how un-interested he was in daily school studies. Instead, he chose to spend his youthful days playing and swimming the waters of nearby ponds. *A mere physical realm!*

Is it not ironic that intellectually predominant people are drawn to their teachings?

Below, I have shared incidents from the lives of two realised persons....

“Nityananda Baba of Ganeshpuri, in his earlier days...

“One day a Yogi was walking on a village street. He noticed a youth fighting a bull, holding it by its horns. He watched the spirit and energy of the youth. The Yogi called the youth later and said, ‘You are the one I have been searching for’. The Yogi shared his sacred knowledge of ancient Yogic practices (Prana Vidya) with his chosen youth.

Actually, the Yogi had selected thirteen people to share his valued knowledge with. This youth was the only who actually realised the knowledge just six months after initiation and undertaking intense practices as Sadhana. Comparing to the other twelve, six months was an extremely short period to attain realisation of such a great knowledge.

The Yogi then sent this youth northwards to begin his wandering life and share knowledge to those inclined to learn.

The Yogi is none other than Sivananda Paramahansa from Vadakarai in Kerala, belonging to the earlier part of the last century. And the youth is Nityananda Baba.

Although Nityananda Baba never mentioned anything about Sivananda Paramahansa, the followers of Sivananda Paramahansa consider and include Nityananda Baba in the lineage of their Guru. They have a rare photograph of Nityananda Baba seated on the lap of his Guru Sivananda Paramahansa. This I believe to be true and have seen the picture of them together.”

The point I would like to highlight is the reason why Sivananda chose this particular youth. Sivananda noticed and recognised the agility and energy of the youth. He knew this is what is precisely needed for the path of Prana Vidya, an entirely energy based path.



Another incident is about the famous Zen Master, Hui-Neng, (638-713 AD)

“Everyday, he would collect firewood in his native village. Once he came to hear of a Zen Master reciting a diamond Sutra in a Monastery in Hupei. Being spiritually inclined he set off. He travelled for one month before he reached the Monastery. He met the Master. The Master was the fifth Patriarch Head, Hung-Jen.

After meeting the Master, he joined the Monastery as a cook. He was also responsible for cutting and collecting firewood for the kitchen fire. He worked during the day and would meet his Master at night. Time passed by.

The day came when the sixth Patriarch was to be chosen. The Fifth Patriarch announced, ‘All disciples can write a verse that speaks of their very own understanding of the teachings, for me to read’.

No one came forward. Shen shui was one of the tutors teaching the thousand students of the Monastery. That night Shen shui wrote a poem but as he didn’t have the courage directly give it to the Master, he chose to write it on the corridor walls.

*“Our body is the Bodhi Tree,
Our mind is an illumined Mirror,
With care we wipe them hour-by-hour,
And let no dust alight.”*

Next day the Master read the poem on the wall but was not convinced. Although Shen shui had come close, he felt something still missing.

A young monk read the verse on the wall and was reciting it to himself while passing through the kitchen. Hui-Neng, the cook heard the verse from this boy. He also felt something was missing.

So, with the help of that boy, Hui-Neng late that night wrote a verse on the corridor wall.

*“There is no Bodhi tree
Nor stand of a mirror,
Since all is void,
How can the dust alight?”*

Early next day, the Master read the new verse on the corridor wall and felt immensely satisfied but didn’t express it to anyone. He had understood Hui-Neng had written it. In front of all the students, the Master erased Hui-Neng’s verse from the wall.

Secretly, the Master called Hui-Neng, offered him the Sacred Robe and bowed to him as the insignia of the next in lineage. The Master

advised him to leave and go towards the south as the jealousy and ignorance of the people here would only end up killing him. Saying this, He blessed Hui-Neng with the grace of sharing knowledge to the people in the temple situated in the Kuang province.

Hui-Neng's doctrine stated that, 'enlightenment', based on meditation or on core level insights, is the same.

Hui-Neng was actually only a simple firewood collector, a humble villager. At the Monastery, he worked as a mere cook. He wasn't even one of the disciples there!

Both these life incidents exemplify with great clarity how ones own existential circumstances and situations can unfold the spiritual realm and bring forth a genuine realisation of Truth.

Accomplishing yourself within your own surrounding is your key to the Source that unlocks the hidden spirit within.

My Master once said,

'The Guru is not only within, but also outside as your external circumstances'.



RIVER SUTRA

If the edge of a sword meets no resistance, it passes through and cuts nothing.

A person full of egoism is quickly hurt, ready to take offence or is likely to interpret things in ways that feel hurtful to his sense of dignity. It shows he feels a dent on his self-protective impulse or protective attitude and dislikes it.

"While still a teenager I recall standing on a bridge under which a river was flowing. I playfully stretched out my hands over the bridge railing. I could feel a tingling sensation in the palms of my hands.

Surprised by the experience I began to question. What was it? Although I couldn't come up with any concrete answer for it, I did know one thing - 'the river was alive'.

I checked for the same sensation over the waters of a still pond. It wasn't the same. Then, I went up a nearby mountain to a waterfall and checked over the waters there. I verified my experience at different points of the falls. I discovered something. The tingling experience was much stronger and sharper and wasn't limited to the palms of my hands. I felt it even on my face.

Why was the tingling stronger at the falls than the river? And why did the falls feel more alive than the flowing river?

The flowing river also has Prana, the living force. And the tingling experience was this cohesive wholesome nature mingled with the flowing water. As for the mountain waterfall, what made it different from the river was its humble flow. It enhanced a higher momentum and even greatly empowered the living force of Prana.

This spontaneous insight unfolded and penetrated to my very core and gradually helped me recognise this very phenomena reflecting in all dimensions of life.

The true strength of living comes from humility and not power. Even power derives its strength from absolute humbleness."

Life is like an unbound river. But, people prefer the river of life to flow as the calm waters of a protected canal. They rather not get thrust into the main stream river filled with rapids and free flowing flexible currents only because they are left feeling exposed and vulnerable. Here is the resistance!

It can even be understood as ones internal condition: the lack of absolute humility. Humility has its own beauty and vulnerability, which carries its own deep significance.

When there is neither resistance nor egoism our basic nature, our primal ignorance is laid upon the altar of life.

It no longer belongs to the individual - but belongs to life. And this condition allows a free flow of life, a certain ardour, intensity and integrity.

On the other hand, what we think our nature to be is actually our acquired nature, a pseudo creation, a gathering of blindly acquired forces in ignorance of our own true nature.

What we think we know; all is acquired from here.

Many of us live in an existential neurosis born from the web of this acquired nature and try filling the existent hollowness within - which nothing can fill. All our efforts and struggles just drag us further into acquired ignorance. And then, when we truly realise the futility of our so-called will, the acquired ignorance falls away. Each one has to eventually confront this primal ignorance born with them.

The Primal Ignorance is Mother Sakthi and the acquired ignorance is the Maya. Even, trying to understand Truth deepens the well of our acquired ignorance. Unaware of Truth, whatever we do in the path of spirituality would only be through materialistic approaches.

Rather than worshipping the imagined and assumed Truth, worshipping the Primal ignorance is true and genuine Worship.

*“As with his staff the teacher roused the pupil
Who in his presence slumbereth, ever unto it,
The benevolent Lord with Maya awakens,
The soul that in prolonged egoity slumbereth.”*

Thirumanthiram Verse 2165

*“To abide in Self within oneself by
Meditating, ripening and falling in Bliss - Samadhi
Oh! Mind, you yield Maya
Like jewels are made of gold,
If you are free from your stains (impurities)
I shall attain redemption.
Who else is as kind to me as you are
None! None!
You are equal to the form of Gracious God!
To my life, you become the body itself.”*

Verse - 7

*“Amongst those who embodied
Even if, be they Brahma or any other Gods!
If they can refuse you or can be without you,
Hardly possible! Hardly possible!
What else can be without you
In the world mundane and beyond?
If understood, to label you ‘non-existent’ is unjust,
Even I shall adore you as ‘the one that exists’!
To end my ignorant state, now you must
Return to the glorious origin from
Where your life started!”*

Verse - 8

*“You had accompanied with me, many a day
Even if you died now by enquiry
By which you separated from me,
I shall bow down (or salute) your boundary perfectly
By silent (mauna) Guru himself who ruled me
I will become as His grace*

*Freeing 'I' and 'mine',
Eight Siddhis, Mukthi
Shall be mind upon this world
Through you my sadness will be ended."*

Verse - 9

Mandalathin Verses by Sage Tayumanavar

A Siddha cannot be called anti-social, but can be described to be beyond social. Even though He rebels against all conditioning, He is well aware of how we need it for a true and genuine enquiry for Truth to arise.

The Siddhas aver that, *'he who becomes aware of the true support, rejects all other flimsy supports that earlier were luring'*. It is true panacea for the cessation of suffering at all levels. Siddhas emphasize the word, 'Saarpu Unardhal', which means the realisation or the discerning of the inherent true support. This seems more appropriate than the term 'Advaita', which is used to indicate the non-dual relation of Soul with Self.

Even with the ultimate Realisation of Truth to be the same, the Siddhas chose to point the way to Truth to begin at the human level - *wherever one stands*, rather than pointing at Truth to be a stated fact, Advaitic style.

*"Soul rises on severing its ties with
Delusive allurements of maidens and sense objects,
Approaching the Mother, embodiment of Grace divine,
Whose clasp he lets go, only to re-unite in oneness with the Father
- the Lord of Kachi-Ekamba."*

Pattinathar Ekambam Maalai

Soon after birth, at first a child is innately familiar only with its Mother and shares an exclusive relationship with her. In due course, the Mother introduces the child to the Father. Likewise, authentic-living in our Primal ignorance naturally takes us to the Universal Father, the Truth, Siva.

*"The dormant mature dame is stirred to awake,
Whence He with Her in amity knit - Rise and fly!
Proclaiming, that you have seen your True Self- rise and fly!"*

Tiruvunthiar Verse 14

Below, I share a revelation bestowed by the grace of my Sat Guru, glowing with the essence of the above message.

*"As long as one tries to grasp at anything external,
One would try to grasp internally, too.
As long as one tries to grasp anything internal,
One would try the same externally, too.*

Drop Both!

Live in the remaining that you have...

And live in that - abiding as you are!"

Our approach to life is a direct reflection of our approach to ourselves. Likewise, our approach to ourselves within reflects in our approach to the world. By this neurotic movement, we inherit the acquiring nature.

When we are unaware of the nature of Truth, how can we be aware of how to reach it?

*"Ponder not: think of nothing: see not yourself in the fore-ground;
What you behold; let it be that."*

Thiru Arut Payan, Verse 8

When we are in an attitude of spontaneous surrender to Existence, we are in the state of Primal Ignorance. This primal ignorance, as a fundamental vibration illumines the non-dual mind, the pure mind. In pure mind, the original and the mirror-image perception are identical. It is a direct perception of the true nature of relationship between the observer and the object of observation.

Here, the Hand that holds us ever, unfolds; The Hand we were unaware of...the Hand that devours our individuality and unfolds the infinite dimension.



THE WALK OF SIDDHAS

Even though Siddha Master are hard to find in society, they are ever present, emanating their distinguishable, yet 'disguised' for some presence. They are known for their reluctance to speak and express as teachers... only because, their very nature goes against the self-proclamation of being a teacher... They share by their presence and not by verbal discourses. What I truly wish to convey here is that they do not separate themselves from their teaching!

A Siddha Master never finds the need for verbalising a teaching only because it is already speaking through him.

For an ordinary mind, even a single darshan of a Siddha Master could be highly unconventional in nature, but would result in a life-shaping phenomena; beginning the birth of true living...

In today's age if we are missing easy access to True Masters, it is only because of our own faulty judgments, prejudices and fixated ideas of how a Master should look and behave. Dropping such a censorship attitude would free us of the fallacy holding us apart from the grace of arriving and surrendering at the feet of the Sat Guru.

Many Siddha Masters appear eccentric, entirely devoured by madness - a picture of extreme inapproachability for the common world. Those of conditioned mind would find it hard to even consider approaching such a Master. These Divine Masters remain under the guise of inapproachability or inaccessibility, not as escapism from the world, but are actually most accurately mirroring the conditioning-gripped society around.

When one is truly ready and does approach Them in all trust and openness, the Master serves as the Mirror that reflects the conditionality one is attached to. Initially, this reflection is shocking and could bring out a deep fear and threat felt towards his believed identity. This uncommon and rare experience gives the feeling of the carpet being tugged from under the feet and as if there is no known ground to stand on. The Master skilfully exposes ones ever-trembling Ego.

He exposes the root cause that triggers your escape from realistic situations just to hide safely behind a life of illusion and habitual acquiring.

This sort of a root encounter leaves one in a space unknown. Then, as balance gradually reappears within ones being, once again the Master creates a milieu of uncommon circumstances that further break ones conditioning and shakes up the feeble balance.

At this point, anyone may easily consider himself to have entered into a completely irrational world. But, from the irrationality of our Siddha Master unfolds a deeper understanding. One is able to see with clarity how feeble his ground has been. It was never a genuine grounding at all, as it got easily shaken and swept away.

After this, as a last resort, one feels pushed to fall into him'self or into a surrendering communion with his Guru, which is not separate from your 'Self'.

So, a life of being with a Siddha Master is a journey of Mirroring, then breaking of conditionings and eventually the transcending of this conditioning, which brings one to fall and settle in ones natural state.



Neither is the spirit of the Siddha describable nor are the states of his activities comprehensible and neither can the depth of his simplicity be defined by our complex mind. He knows the power hidden in contentment and nurtures that contentment, he knows the valour hidden in compassion and so flows as compassion, he knows...

Pampatti Siddha Sings

*"In the clash of caste, we will kindle the fire
In the open market, we will plant our staff*

*On the cross road of the street, we will play and dance,
In the undesirable house, we will make friendships,
Strolling, loitering, we will sleep,
Felicitous women we will enjoy.
All the five primal Brahma are ignorant.
O Snake, Dance, saying this”*

Pampatti Siddhar, Verse - 3, Songs of Pampatti Siddhar

...this indescribable Divine Master, a Siddha, is spontaneous; living his understanding, however little it may be, without any thought given to the possible consequences, in a state of no resistance between the understanding and the action. He moves in abandonment, spontaneity, happiness, and peace. He has the fearlessness and humility to live his understanding - come what may. To him, every lovely ripple on the boundless ocean of life has its own tale to tell! Life is not something static but constantly expanding, transforming, evolving, unleashing as each individual form and as each individual expression of itself. Each moment unfolds significance, a great sensitivity and the full expression in life.

These divine beings live one with Nature, inseparable from each and all.

In living like this, with the knowingness of Nature, plants, animals and birds, there arose a communication that still prevails between them. They spoke. And in these ways, the ancient Siddhas revealed the healing properties of thousands of herbs and the multi dimensional nature of pulse in a human being based on the characteristic movements of animals, and the cosmic nature.



MEETING WITH THEM

Meeting with Them is completely unpredictable. The element of mystery never ceases to be. I have chosen two personal experiences of meetings with my teachers of the Siddha Path and tried to illustrate how unique each experience is and no matter how I may have readied myself, how contrary the actual meeting revealed to be.

Poi Sollan Ayya - Tantric Teacher

Living in my native place, there was a time in my life when I repeatedly heard the mention of Poi Sollan from followers of different spiritual paths and practices. He was known to frequent the shady-yard, a place where second hand goods were sold. He would either sit near a small teashop or sometimes be found mending old clothes. All the descriptions I heard in this time matched. He was said to be a peculiar

and non-compromising personality. Some even said if I were to ever go and visit him he would surely chase me shouting uncommon utterances without any consideration. Keeping in mind all that I had heard I went in search of him in the shady-yard. I couldn't find him.

A year passed. I heard he was in a cave called Gorakkar cave at a mountain called Elephant Hill, a place where several sadhus lived. I decided to visit.

It was almost afternoon by the time I arrived at the cave in the mountain. I stood facing the steps that lead to the cave. At the entrance sat an old villager, who seemed to be a herdsman. I contemplated asking him the whereabouts of Poi Sollan but a prejudice got in my way, 'What would a poor and old herdsman like him know of such a great Siddha Tantric.' Thinking thus I ignored his presence and walked into the cave.

Three Sadhus, all clad in orange robes with religious symbols decorating their foreheads, greeted me with a smile. There was expectation glittering in their eyes. Close by, around a corner sat two people grinding herbs. It occurred to me that the Swami's were native healers of a sort and had thought me their new customer.

I asked to meet Poi Sollan. They were both shocked and disappointed. One of them enquired, 'Where are you coming from and what do you need from that useless old man?'

Taken aback by his manner of reference, I asked, 'Why do you call him so?'

Another swami answered, 'Yes, he is useless. He is a friend of our Master but of no use to us. He is too old even to grind herbs. And we even have to feed him as and when we cook for ourselves.'

The third swami who had not spoken so far suddenly asked, 'but what is your purpose of meeting him?'

Referring to the person who had guided me here, I expressed my wish to know from Poi Sollan about the Siddha path. Surprised they all simultaneously laughed.

'Who told you this about him? Our Master is the Yogi and we are his disciples. People come here with their health problems to have our Darshan and resolve their other difficulties in life.'

I got a little irritated by his proud proclamations but preferred to remain calm. Sensing this one of them said, 'didn't you notice him on your way in? He usually lays on a rock to the left of the steps leading up.'

I was stunned. 'Was that Poi Sollan?' I wondered.

Thanking them and nodding politely to all, I took their leave. I felt relieved at having escaped those ignorant vultures. But the overwhelming surprise of Poi Sollan's appearance was nagging me. 'Was he really the Siddha Tantric Master whom all those people had been so afraid of?'

Holding two completely controversial views, I stood before him. He wore only a dhoti. Instead of a shirt there was a dirty old towel flung over his left shoulder. A stick lay on the rock beside him on his right. Seeing me, he politely said, 'Please come and sit on this rock, you have come a long way in this heat.' Hearing this, all my fears about him left and I went and sat on a small rock beside him.

I told him my name and the name of the person who had guided me to him. He immediately responded saying, 'Yes, but it was necessary for you to hear two different types of recommendations before you could actually meet me.' I understood what he meant by the 'second' recommendation!

But, only later I understood; the reason he hid behind the business-minded Swami's was to guard the secrets and ways of Tantra. Moreover, he had chosen to spend his final days there, out of his love for his friend, as the cave was his friend's samadhi shrine. Both had been spiritual colleagues of younger days and somewhere down the line had separated for a period.

Just by merely seeing Poi Sollan Ayya, one would not imagine him to be more than an illiterate villager or a simple herdsman. But his other, veiled but shining face glows his expertise in reading the mysteries of Nature and changing or altering the array of invisible elements and powers hidden within Her...



Quite contrary to the type of meeting with Poi Sollan Ayya was my meeting with Peria Swami. If I describe the meeting with Poi Sollan Ayya to be a subtle journey through a battle of contradictions then Peria Swami made certain I knew!

Peria Swami - the Alchemy Siddha

I speak of the time when I went by 'patha yatra' (pilgrimage on foot) to Palani. Palani is the holy hill where Siddha Bogar's Samadhi Shrine and the Navapashana statue of Lord Murugan, created by Siddha Bogar are found.

After having the Darshan of both lord Murugan and the Samadhi shrine of Siddha Bogar, I chose to continue my stay there. I went to a place around half a kilometre away from Palani where Sivananda Paramahansa, the founder of the Siddha Samaj attained Videha Mukthi.

After I sat in the mysterious silence there I returned to the Mandapam, (a shed like structure of stone pillars), where beggars and sadhus spent their nights. I chose to lay down there for the night.

But I couldn't sleep. I struggled a whole thirty minutes. Maybe it was the new surroundings. But even after laying down for half an hour when sleep didn't come, I decided to get up. Just as I sat up, I noticed an old man looking towards me with a smile. I responded with a smile. He wore an orange Dhoti and had an orange towel wrapped around his head.

All of a sudden, he asked, 'You had Darshan of my great grandfather?' (Paattanaar - in Tamil). Still looking at him I pondered over his weird question, 'Darshan of great grand father?'

He pointed towards the hill. I understood. In that sense, I had not yet seen Siddha Bogar so I replied, 'No.'

'When the drums are beaten you will see him', was his reply.

Once again, I was at a loss. I had no idea what he meant. And I couldn't ask him because he turned his face the other way.

No more words were exchanged and five whole minutes passed. I decided to approach him and offer him some tea from the late night teashops close by. Just as I stood and began walking down the steps, I saw him walking too, leaving the sleeping people behind.

I asked, 'Can I offer you tea?'

'Do you know Vana Durga?', was his question in response. 'She is there, we can go there'.

Vana Durga is the name of Goddess Durga living in a forest situated at the bottom of Palani hill. I followed him. After walking for fifteen minutes, we arrived. The road was isolated. There was nobody there and all I could hear was the wind blowing heavily. He sat under the compound wall of the Temple. I sat down near him. Coming from his body was the distinct smell of zinc. Then I saw his eyes. I saw his pupils surrounded by a bluish colour circle.

Then it struck me. Only a high Siddha Yogi or a Siddha of inner alchemy can have such eyes. My observation told me he was in the

process of Dasa Diksha (the ten kinds of initiations involved with physical transformation.) When I looked at his body, I was stunned. I saw no wrinkles and his skin was soft like that of a baby.

Noticing my curiosity, he burst into a laugh and said, 'My guru offered me this.

'Bogar?', I asked.

'Sage Vishwamithra', he said.

I couldn't keep calm anymore and asked, 'What is Vaasi?' In this period of my life, I was passionately eager to know the secret of the Yogic practice of the Siddhas, known as Vaasi Yoga.

He answered, 'It is Siva residing as Life Vapour in each and everything.'

Keen to know more, I promptly asked, 'Can you initiate me?'

'Why do you need to know? He asked and then proceeded, 'Do you even realise what it is that you are asking?'

I shook my head. He said, 'No need of practicing it as a Yoga, first just sense the life principle divinely residing in everything and everybody.'

Saying this he opened a small old bag he had with him and pulled out two tiny bottles. The moment he opened them a strong smell of something like horse urine filled the air. He mixed them in particular ratios and suddenly handed a little portion of it to me to drink.

At first, I hesitated. But a thought crossed my mind, 'When with a Siddha one needn't doubt in anyway.' He was watching my eyes. In that very instant I saw his face change into that of an eagle. His ears grew a little bigger and his nose appeared lengthier and sharper. The smell of zinc coming from his body grew strong. I grew dizzy. I accepted and drank the mixture. As soon as I swallowed, 'Oh God!' It was like swallowing burning charcoals. Instantly my entire body felt on fire and my hairs stood on end. I grew highly sensitive. I saw smoke emerging from each and every pore of my body. I started coughing incessantly. Standing up, I began jumping about unable to tolerate the burning pain. My entire body felt being pierced by needles of fire.

He laughed and said, 'run away from here, go to the temple area and immediately drink some un-boiled milk. I ran. I drank some milk and felt a little better. At least I could get a hold of my thoughts. I pondered, 'what had he given me? It seemed to be a distilled solution of a sort. But why had his face changed to that of an eagle? Was he a Black magician or was he Left-hand Tantric alchemist?'

Then it struck me. My medicinal teacher had once said to me years ago. 'Don't accept anything from a Vaathi (Alchemist). They will test you with their alchemical preparations.'

He might have been a Rasa Siddha, an alchemist. I sensed a strong hesitation within me. My mind got masqueraded by unstoppable thoughts related with the so-called security of my life.

The smell of horse urine and zinc filled the air around me. I panicked. I felt he was somewhere close again. Then I realised the smell was coming from the pores of my own skin. Yes, it came from my body.

Since I am already living in this path, this is a life or death opportunity granted to me. This was Siddha Bogar's blessing. I resolved, this time I would approach him without any prejudice.

When I returned, his face was normal but his tone was just as teasing. He mischievously said, 'if you have to be with me you will have to run often, as you just did!'



*"Neither Creation,
Nor Destruction
Never, Never, Never"*



*“Remain Summa - Oh the ghost within,
As I told the Sutra
The place where it happens - Oh the ghost within,
That will burn you beyond”*

-Agapai Siddhar songs, Verse 3

Walking along the Siddha Yogic and Tantric paths, we now arrive at the path of Gnana, the glorious Primal Wisdom. Gnana Siddhas, don't insist on any philosophy or practice to realize Truth. Some of them are just wandering Siddhas and some are Avadhootas, sitting idle, without asserting their presence at all.



SUMMA IRU: PILGRIMAGE TO NOWHERE

*“Bereft of illusions, bereft of ignorance, bereft of intellect;
Without embracing fish-eyed damsels and their attachments,
Themselves as themselves, remaining in ‘simply be’;
Thus are they,
The sacred beings in Siva robes.”*

Thirumanthiram 1678, by Thirumoolar

For the wandering and the idle Siddhas, the underlying attitude remains *Summa Iru*. Summa iru literally means ‘just be’ or ‘simply be’ - ‘apparent non-activity’. Summa iru is not a noun but a verb with several attitudes and principles implied. It stands against all conditioning - personal, social, religious and philosophical.

Siddhas are Sahaja Manushas, Spontaneous Persons.

They don't believe in living for any purpose other than spreading the message of Existence. For them, the bliss of Samadhi and the objective distractions are equal in nature.

To Him, being is life in time, as existence in eternity.

Pampatti Siddhar sings:

*“Four Vedas, six Sastras, several treatises
On modus Operandies,
Epics, Tantric literature espousing arts,
Varieties of general other books -
Oh! Snake, dance!
Declaring all these as useless.”*

- Pampatti Siddhar, Verse 98

*“Rites are just Moss - Oh the ghost within,
Knowledge – a hollow stable,
The God is but an illusion – Oh the ghost within,
All is like that!”*

Agapai Siddhar, Verse 72

The above songs sing the spirit of the Siddhas soaring high against all conditioning.

Says Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi

‘Summa Iru is non-action. Non-action is unceasing eternal activity. His stillness is like the apparent stillness of a fast spinning top (gyroscope). Its, very speed cannot be followed by the eye so it appears to be still. Yet it is spinning.’

The apparent inaction of a Siddha is not inertness!

The incessant activity emerging through him cannot be grasped by the mind. The more common definition used by people for the words Summa Iru is, ‘to tightly hold on to your-self’. It feels completely incorrect, because actually Summa Iru is actually, non-confronting in nature.

By non-confronting or by dropping all confronting tendencies one naturally abides in himself.

A river always moves ahead, flows to its next, without confronting anything. We cannot judge at any moment what course it will take.

Siddha Pattinathar sings:

*“Wandering like a ghost, lying like a corpse,
Eating up all the alms like a dog, labouring like a fox,
Treating good maidens as mothers,
Greeting everybody with humility,
Will live like babies -
Those who have realized the Truth.”*

General songs - Verse 35, by Siddha Pattinathar

From the above songs, we cannot miss or ignore the eccentric attitudes of the wandering Siddhas.

No method, strategy or technique at the level of human-will can bring man in ‘doing nothing’, or Summa Iru!

Living in ‘simply be’ is a humble allowing; a great openness!

‘Allowing’ is ever-present and eternally happening in our core, the heart. Allowing is the primordial relationship with life. Life always orients through

allowing. It is to 'simply be' in what is completely and creatively present in the beginning-less and endless flow of life. Life has no history. Allowing is to be a way of ones presence as how he completely, freely and truly is. This allowing is 'summa iru'. Allowing is neither acquiring nor refusing, but contemplating. A Siddha is this allowing presence, open and yielding to the emergence of the whole being and the simple abiding of the yielding presence.

*They speak of states two, 'I' and 'He',
But there is a state, where 'I' and 'He' are undifferentiated,
Those who are in Supreme non-activity state,
Will not the difference cognise,
Abiding in Self, and He and Self as one uniting,
Is the state of 'Sutha', Absolute pure."*

Thirumanthiram, Verse - 2348, Siddha Thirumoolar

Doing nothing, summa iru is an acceptance of our limitation!

Here, everything is changing, is transitory and each is confined, having its own boundary. Our body itself is bound but that is what gives it shape. Our leg is placed upon the earth, facing a dead end; but our head is towards the endless sky. This illustrates our body to be a chamber where the endless and the end, both play and dance. Both heaven and earth meet in our body.

Each limitation has its own potential and a significant message to deliver. When we stand well grounded on earth and our head turns to the skies - we are in our 'uprightness'. A simple but puzzling truth is that every limitation has within itself a seed for 'the release'. So, a person who allows himself to 'simply be' in his limitation, he is released from it. Nothing more than living in it is needed! There is nothing to change. This is the way for release already given to man.

Summa iru implies nothing other than abiding in ones limitation!

When one accepts his actual limitation, he naturally abides as his core, the unlimited heart, from where eternal life shapes its play of limitation. Limited and the limitless, both are continuing participants in the arena of Life. There is no duality where the Siddhas 'simply be'.

Here I share a few holy words spoken by Jesus Christ.

*"For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed,
Neither hid, that shall not be known.
Therefore what so ever, you have spoken in darkness
Shall be heard in the light;
And that which you have spoken
In the ear in the closets
Shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops."*



SUMMA IRU - Authentic Surrender

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi once told a story of a realized wanderer who appeared irrational and more than insane to onlookers. The story is about 'UPPU KOTTHAN'.

Once upon a time, an idle person by the name of 'Uppu Kotthan' lived in a small village by the seashore. He had the disease elephantiasis in his right leg, which made him limp as he walked.

His life was devoid of any social activity. He remained idle and useless. The villagers watched his activities and wondered why he passed his life in vain like this. One day they decided to urge him towards earning a living for him self. They gave him money and advised him to procure some salt from the seashore and to go sell it in the plains and then procure rice from the plains and come sell it by the seashore. Instead, Uppu Kotthan went to the plains to procure salt where it is expensive, came, and sold it by the seashore where it is cheap! With the remaining money he then procured rice from the seashore area, went, and sold it in the plains! Within few such strange transactions, he lost all the money given by the villagers. Now the villagers were at a complete loss and abandoned any further idea of helping him seeing his responses.

Uppu Kotthan once again went back to his ways and spent his days taking a rock and pushing it up a nearby hill with the help of a stick and from the top of the hill letting it roll back down. This would bring him great joy and laughter. Uppu Kotthan would spend his nights eating and resting at a nearby cremation ground. For his daily meal, he would collect the rice from the mouths of the corpses brought for cremation. (In Hindu funeral rites the dead persons would be cremated after being fed with rice offering. This was a ritual for the last rites before the body is set for cremation). He would cook the collected rice and have it for his meal every night. This way he wouldn't need to beg for his food.

One night, at the cremation ground, while he was engrossed in cooking the rice appeared around him several subtle beings that served the Goddess Mother Kali. Finding a man in the cremation ground at this late hour they promptly wished to chase him out. They danced vigorously and made threatening sounds to scare him away, but their efforts were in vain.

Uppu Kotthan remained immersed in cooking the rice. Finally, Mother Goddess Kali herself appeared before him. Unmoved even by Her appearance, Uppu Kotthan continued his work.

Seeing that he ignored Her, Mother Kali, enraged and filled with wrath, in a thundering voice said,

'I, Bhadhra Kali, have come'.

(Bhadhra Kali is the most wrathful form of Mother Kali. The word Bhadhra means wrathful or ferocious but in Tamil the word 'Bhadhra', used colloquially, also means 'ten and a half'.)

But even these words didn't make him fear. He retorted, 'then I am Pathin Ondrai Kali '. (Pathin ondrai means eleven and a half).

From his fearless response, She recognised him to be no ordinary being. She expressed Her wish to bless him and asked what he would want from Her. He asked to live forever. She denied his blessing, as it wasn't possible for Her to grant it. He must ask for something else, She told him. Uppu Kotthan asked death to come to him in that moment itself. She refused again. She could not grant it.

On hearing Her refusal, Uppu Kotthan asked, 'Why have you appeared before me then? You can leave.'

She urged him to ask for something She could bless him with. He asked Her to shift the disease afflicting his right leg to his left leg!

It was granted...

What does this story mean?

One day Kapali Sastri while walking with Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi on the Arunachala Mountain asked with all genuinity if Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi could tell him what state Bhagwan was in. To this Bhagwan's reply was, 'Even if the Trimurti's appear before me, give me darshan and ask me to choose a boon, I would tell them: "Be pleased, let me have no more darshan."'

(Trimurti Darshan is the darshan of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva)

*"Behold the fowls of the air;
For they sow not, neither do
They reap, nor gather into barns,
Yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.
Are ye not much better than they.*

Jesus Christ



LETTING BE

These Reluctant Siddhas believe in complete submission to the act of living. Their main teaching is *‘Don’t exert your will in existence’*. Remain summa is the pathless way of the spirit, an open mind and a lightening spirit which moves spontaneously in any direction, through any given situation, according to the Dharma - the inherent order of Existence. When we begin to believe in factual knowledge, spontaneity ceases to be; yet neither can we deliberately adopt a line of inaction, for that would at once turn into an action!

*“You! Gorakkar - as a disciple, asked many questions humbly.
You asked what is the need for God to create and sustain?
I ask you, what is the need for mind to acquire and wear out?
Just dive deep into this enquiry and the answer is hidden in it!
Where there is no experience at all -
That nothingness is the Grand Release, the Mukthi!
What you need for it, is ‘devoted feeling’, the Bhakthi!”*

- Collected Verse on ‘the phenomena of making Gold’,
By Agasthiyar Suvarna Jala Thirattu

‘Remain summa’ does not mean literally doing nothing, but letting everything do what it really does; for its nature to be satisfied!

This is - living without assertion. The daring *‘letting be’* holds secrets for mastering circumstances without asserting oneself for or against them. It is the attitude of yielding to an oncoming force in a way that it is unable to affect you. ‘Remaining summa’ requires a daring letting-go, sitting and wandering loose to life.

Summa Iru is letting-be!

Letting-be is not keeping a distinguished idea of how one is ‘letting oneself be’ and how one is ‘letting others be’. No, There need be no difference. In a ‘Daring letting-be’, everything ‘is’ a living whole; without separation; yet with no identical - a grand paradox.

*“Oh! Mother! It is amazing
isn’t it? Isn’t it?
Making me Grand expanse
So that to realise myself,
You made me ‘Summa’ there
Apart from being in bliss there,
What else is there to speak?”*

Kallalin, Verse - 25, Sage Tayumanavar

It is the Mantra – ‘Summa Iru’; do not make any change in it. Always bear whatsoever falls as your lot – be it pleasure or pain. It is true that whenever

somebody or something troubles us we try to change it; this itself can be avoided; instead try and bear it calmly as it comes, - 'summa iru'. Many people are given to chant the Mantra of the divine name of Lord Rama or Lord Sankara etc. All these Mantras lead the chanter to 'summa iru'. Bhajans, Yoga, etc. all lead to the same - 'summa iru.'

Real happiness lies in 'summa iru', no matter what the circumstances are, good or bad, pleasurable or painful, be content with it; do not try and avoid or change them; in this lies all happiness.

The Siddhas ever-stay in the state of 'Daring letting-be'. What is meant by 'summa iru, now? He quietly drifts along without any resistive feeling towards all things we label dirty or bad, or heat or cold, rain or storm, fasting, beating and so on. Likewise, neither does he feel overly pleased when he experiences the opposite of each. His divinity shines as he does not try and cause a change in his surrounding or environment nor in any affairs of the world. He lives in a simple continuity, facing everything that comes from the outside towards him with no attempts to interfere in its progressive flow. And while amidst the welcome or unwelcome circumstances, neither does he attempt to change himself from within to ward them off or protect himself from them in any way. There is a wholesome allowing and a daring letting-be from within to without and likewise from without to within. He faces things as they come, transparent to all differences or separation. This is the state of 'summa iru': He who remains in the state of 'summa iru' always experiences the state of God - the state of Infinite Bliss.

He can be likened to a blade of grass enduring all weather conditions yet alive and rooted to the earth and glowing a crisp green freshness!

We try to have things as we want and each of us are used to this standpoint right from birth. The behaviour of a Siddha is exact opposite to this. And just because Their behaviour appears so contrary we tend to take them as insane, even so they yet remain in the state of 'summa iru'; unperturbed by what we say.

*Knows not Itself, knows not others to be,
If thrives, would annul; has no origin-in It's Presence
The five functionings, by the word of bliss
Listening even little, then possible!*

Olivil Odukkam, Verse-24, By Sage Kannudaiya Vallal



LIKE THE FIGURES!

There are only ten figures in this world - one to nine and zero. That is all. You may write a sum of ten or even twenty figures yet the sum is only about

placing these ten figures in different places. All the affairs of this world move based on the figures of one to nine and zero; zero being the last. Similarly, the affairs of the world are managed amongst 84 lac living forms. Whether it is God or anybody else, he only has this fixed set of 84 lac living forms to play with - that is all. Like in the play of figures, you can either run about from one to nine or arrive at zero. Once you arrive at zero – there is nothingness in the world, the world play is over. Whether you run about from one to nine or, arrive at zero depends on you!

To arrive at zero is to return to the Original State and accomplish the only one attitude - the attitude of summa iru.

In truth, Summa iru, the attitude of letting be, is neither action nor non-action.



QUALITY IS ALWAYS 'IN LESS'

*“The Brahmins who wished to listen to Vedanta,
They didn’t give up their desire, even after listening to it.
Vedanta is the place where desire ends
Those who truly hear Vedanta are desire less.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 229, by Siddha Thirumoolar

To yield to existence, according to the reluctant Siddhas the first thing is dropping all acquired inessentials. Siddhas have sung many verses about illusion and the changing nature of the world, emphasizing the need to renounce the unnecessary as the first step.

Renunciation doesn’t mean to literally and forcibly follow begging. It implies understanding the mechanical functionality of all inessential things in relation to oneself; and hacking away at them in order to unravel the finer quality in one’s way of living. It is the difference between need and desire. True renunciation is the mind’s attitude, not of the physical dimension. Only then, can one conserve energy in a meaningful assimilable form and live authentically in one’s own nature.

And neither is renunciation giving up! But allowing how things go away. *“This too shall pass”*, this is the motto of Nature.

When everything is in constant change, renunciation is only the acceptance of it.

To be secure and hold on in an everlasting way will only be mocked by life. Seeing things as they are preludes the acceptance of ‘going away’. A Siddha just lives his life. HE is a drifting flow in that ever-changing quantum field of energy.

To realize one's unconditional nature, de-conditioning of all the inessentials needs to happen. Only when we understand, what we know is different from what we are, does renunciation happen naturally and a quality in living starts to manifest itself. The actual working of the Spirit is: Creativity without Destruction, Production without Possession, Action without Self-assertion and Development without Domination...

*“Women become prisons for those who seek them;
The learned are imprisoned by their learning;
Those in penance are imprisoned because of their penance;
The self-aware who strain to reach Him are in prisons too.
All these don't know the nature of the Lord.”*

Thirumoolar Thirumanthiram Verse 2073

It is important to mention that this attitude of the wandering Siddha's is not to be used as a technique to manipulate the laws of Karma nor to undermine the world's response to one's current or past actions. In fact, the majority of people in both the East and the West misunderstand the theory of Karma and its meaning. The superficial, yet popular view of the law of Karma presents a fatalistic viewpoint. But this is not how the Siddhas who are sensitive and aware of how the universe responds to itself, understand Karma.

*“He is Dharma, birthless, kinless,
Resides in the wild, lives by alms,
He, seeing anybody who renounced,
Sunders their bonds of birth.
- you have seen a Divine Madman.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 1616, by Siddha Thirumoolar

*“One God, pervades all ten directions,
None of any direction, where He is not,
Refuge his flower feet; you can cross the roaring karmic sea,
And safely reaching the shore, beyond.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 1451, by Siddha Thirumoolar

There are several types of Karma, called by different names in different cultures. One of them is Kriyaman Karma, which is generated by the individual as the result of his or her decisions. Making a decision based on spiritual principles and aligning the actions to fulfil decisions with a compatible stream of energy present in the cosmos at a particular moment can make one's actions take on the quality of that energy. By this, one becomes a Karmic surfer, catching those waves of energy that enable him to get safely and happily to the shore. Not only that, but by working with, instead of against the flow of the nature's great energy, misfortunes are greatly reduced and disasters avoided.

*“All manifested Karmic actions - Oh the ghost within!
Look!! Are only void,
That which was before unmanifested - Oh the ghost within!
Will emerge - the infinite!”*

-Agapai Siddhar Verse 88

*“The place where the self ceases to be - Oh the ghost within!
There you see the abode of Siva,
For those who lose body consciousness - Oh the ghost within!
There is no lacking.”*

-Agapai Siddhar



LIVING NOW TO NEXT

*“To realize oneself - Oh the ghost within,
Follow the pathless path.
Otherwise realizing others—Oh the ghost within
Is, the knowledge about the devil.”*

Songs of Agapai Siddhar - Verse 78, by Agapai Siddhar

As earlier said, life moves from now to its next, just like a river moves to its forefront;

Why does man miss?

The consciousness of man is broken into various fragments but is kept together mechanically by various adjustments or different associations with the nature of matter and its functions. It hangs in such a condition when it is ‘unawake’. While asleep or dreaming, it does not respond fully nor can it see clearly, which is how habit or blind impulses take over.

When we act mechanically, we only brush the surface of things and are involved or connected by only a fraction of our entire capacity. For instance, even if we see something beautiful, its beauty doesn’t touch the very core of our being because we out of sheer habit pass a rather superficial comment in an offhand manner and move on to something else. Similarly, we even voice our likes and dislikes quite mechanically rather than actually stopping to feel the quality of anything. It is such a superficial response to life’s happenings. That is how we live most part of our life and that is why life feels so unsatisfactory and hollow.

For any action or response to be perfect or complete, it must rise from the totality of our being. True action is action without acting. There cannot be any

depth in our activities if they come from the mind in terms of words and concepts. It often appears as though the depth in oneself can rise only from one's memories. But there does exist a depth of an altogether different nature. It dwells in the pure response arising from the point of no-dimension, the heart, fully charged with primordial creativity. These depths have no foothold in time and may be described as the Spirit of infinite space - having in them all vitality, infinite possibilities and a freshness that belongs to Life.

Motivated actions from the past are artificial.

A Siddha is the one who has reached a stage of being beyond doing anything. This 'doing nothing' is spontaneous activity. Not by a sense of intentional progression but as acts from the direct working of natural laws, Prakrithi, as a consort of a Siddha. This is Absolute Action, completely natural. Changes take place in front of a Siddha without any hindrance. Things are accomplished without assertion.

*"If becoming is to cease - Oh the ghost within!
Let there be no mental imagery.
Abide at the feet of the Sat Guru - Oh the ghost within!
You shall not taste death."*

- Agapai Siddhar Verse 20

This core is one's being, one's spirit.

Spirit is that nature within, which responds constructively to everything that exists.

Sensitivity, which resides along with its wholeness, makes every moment a perfect moment, independent of past or future. A Siddha remains summa, doing nothing and through Him all acts manifest. A Siddha, in this way is a self-portrait of Lord Siva, the Kriyaman - the upholder of all action.

This response, arising from the whole being, may be best reflected through Chuang Tzu's ancient Taoist story of the fighting cock.

"In ancient China there once lived Chi Hsing Tzu, renowned for his ability to train Roosters to fight in sport. Being a specialised trainer, he worked for King Hsuan.

Once, Chi Hsing Tzu was dedicatedly training a truly fine bird. The king was eagerly waiting for the bird to be readied for the fight, and kept asking if it was ready for combat.

'Not yet,' said Chi Hsing Tzu. 'He (the rooster) is brimming with agitation and is easy and willing to pick a fight with any other bird. He is arrogant and proud of his strength.'

The king patiently waited for ten more days before enquiring again. The trainer answered, 'O king, he is not ready yet. The bird still flies into a fiery rage on even hearing the crow of another.'

The King had no choice but to wait for another ten days. 'No Lord, Not yet', said Chi Hsing Tzu. 'He still wears a ferocious look and fluffs out his feathers.'

After another ten long days, finally the trainer, Chi Hsing Tzu went to the King and said, 'Yes, Lord, the bird is finally ready. He doesn't even blink on hearing another bird crow. He stands stock-still like a log of wood. He is a fulfilled and accomplished fighter now. Other birds will take one look at him and run.'"

The word Dhyanam, or meditation means (Dhi + yana) - the way upward, beyond intellect. It is when the body, mind and spirit are properly tuned and brought into natural rhythm; similar to how a musical instrument is finely tuned to play high resonance music from the communion of the seven different notes. Flashing glimpses of Truth manifest beyond the level of intellect through such attuning.

Dhyanam is a dimensional transformation. It is the silencing of the centre of 'me'. With this silencing, emerges a new energy-awareness, which sees and acts in the world in a non-dual way - without dividing life. This is the pre-reflective state, where there is no subject and object.

When Dhyanam or meditation crystallises it leads to transcending the conditioned mind. When the meditator as the meditative self gets completely engulfed, by the ever-staying ground or the Self, experiencing ends.

In the flowering state of Meditation, awareness of unity flowers into compassion. The illusory walls separating one life from another dissolve into oneness. There is no longer subject and object, only a communion with the wholeness of life, an, 'a-logical' whole.

The unfolding essence of Dhyanam was showered forth under the Divine sayings of my Sat Guru,

This has been shared here below...

*"Thinking not of anything in its concreteness,
Nor seeking to interpret symbols, as if deciphering objects material.
Neither putting yourself as one who sees,
Regard steadily the loving wisdom that sees you.
Entering within, lie hidden...
What you cannot see, do not drive towards
In whatever way grace absorbs you,
Wholly, yield yourself,*

*In purity remain, grace entwined,
Repose, under this refreshing shade,
In this, enjoying supreme felicity,
...is humble simplicity.”*

The beauty of a flower does not derive its virtue and significance from anything external to itself. Likewise, the only true response is that which comes from the Heart, the Self, a response that arises with no impediments of reflective thoughts and no division of subject and object. In such a pre-reflective state, in its own point of origin and for its own significance, each thing is present. Each occurring event becomes a key that turns consciousness and unlocks another mysterious facet residing there. Then, the energy called Life, wells up as if from a fountain, from its unknown source and flows into forms and patterns giving full expression to its latent significance and releases its potential.

The force of this release gives life its intensity and spirit!

Fundamentally speaking, energy is simply energy, and life is simply in its moving presence. But we objectify all actions emerging from this flow of energy with some association or imagery. We are the ones who fragmented it into power energy, spiritual energy, sexual energy, compassion energy and so on and condition ourselves.

For instance, when we feel a massive energy, we often associate it in physically blaming others but psychically what we experience is a feeling of our inability. This energy is anger.

Another instance. When our psychological need for love combines with a physical need for catharsis, we call it sexual energy.

Or, when we assume ourselves psychically deprived and crave for physical attention such as love and care, we call it our need for compassion.

We always project the fundamental energy of life and its different patterns and apply it to varying associations and affiliations in these ways. Only when our mind ceases to function as the identifier of choices and we drop setting ideals that define what should be instead of what actually is, will there be no more struggle in the mind by concentrating our energies on assumed objectives to acquire or control.

*“Study for what? - Oh the ghost within!
Activity for what?
All rules and principles - Oh the ghost within!
Have been annulled”.*

- Agapai Siddhar Verse 77

Siddhas, when They sing about the wisdom of Self, They say the chakras signify the fragmented nature of Human energy. They describe it as 'Upathys', the confining states that colour human perception. In truth, there are no chakras! There is neither categorisation nor are there any different levels of energy.

If everything is in a single field of energy and the energy is in its flow, what would happen when one lives in it, as it is?

Once my Siddha teacher said, *'if you repeat the word Vaasi, Vaasi continuously, it will resound as Siva, Siva...'*

When we abide in this ever-flowing energy that moves right ahead; when we abide in this flowing energy by its moving presence, from this moment to its next we can feel the throbbing effervescence - the source of its movement.

Life is in its moving presence leaping out from its ever-stay existence - That, Siddhas salute as Siva.

When a person is really delighted and content to live, life is an end in itself.

Here I remember a story:

"A pandit was greatly bothered about the meaning of life. He approached a hermit living nearby in a hut. The hermit took him to a stream and filled a pot with the stream's water.

Hermit: (Pointing to the stream) What is that?

Pandit: A stream.

Hermit: (Pointing to the pot) What is it?

Pandit: A pot full of stream water.

Hermit: Why don't you call it a stream?

Pandit: The water does not flow in the pot, so it is not a stream.

Hermit: How can it be a stream?

Pandit: When you let it go.

Hermit: As long as you search for the meaning of life, you will feel the meaningless within you.

As the pandit made the gesture of letting go, he understood what the hermit was driving at. Life is a flowing stream and the meaning of life is only a pot full of water."



NOTHING TO SAY

*“Their holy heart trembles not,
Neither comes death, nor suffering, nor night, nor day,
Nor fruits of karma to experience;
Those who, attachment dropped subsided with themselves.”*

Thirumanthiram, Verse 1624, by Siddha Thirumoolar

The Avadhoota Siddhas, after enlightenment, don't really move anywhere and nor do they interact with the world using or assuming some sort of authority or position. They sit in one place, living in primordial awareness (state that is prior to the consciousness of duality).

They repose into the primal dimension of Vettaveli, the space infinite, where the 'I' consciousness moves and fades into nothingness and the fragmentary subject and object relationship subsides.

*“They don't want liberation - Oh the ghost within!
They don't want enlightenment.
They don't want initiation - Oh the ghost within!
Who are Chit itself?”*

Agapai Siddhar songs, Verse 82, By Agapai Siddhar

(‘Chi’ – awareness prior to reflective consciousness)

*“Where are the temples? Where are the sacred ponds?
You loathsome people, who worship temples and ponds;
Temples and ponds are in one's mind,
There is neither creation nor destruction,
Never, never, never!!!”*

Songs of Siva Vakkiyar, Verse 83, by Siddha Siva Vakkiyar

First, be at peace with the way things are. For, in the natural state of things we are already at One! Everything is fundamentally One, it is we who interpret differently.

Let us take for instance the element of Sound.

The doorbell ‘rings’, the ocean ‘roars’, a snake ‘hisses’, a car ‘honks’, a ‘clap’ of thunder, a ‘cat purrs’, the phone ‘rings’ etc...

All these are sounds we have named differently. Truth is One - it has been only given different names. Why?

Because, if we don't interpret, we fear we cannot know!!

The feeling of Unknowing is more intimate than the sense of knowing. To be beyond both - the sense of 'knowing' and 'unknowing' is what is most intimate, as Truth is Unknowable. Just simply to be with it.

Living in the flow of life is to live in 'continuous unknowing'. Mind cannot direct the unknown. So, it has to live in it, which is the only one possibility it has. Any kind of 'learning' keeps us from being truly intimate. It is how we split ourselves and no more feel at One! By remaining perplexed with what will be next, we are constantly building a new image of ourselves. We have allowed little space in ourselves for 'unknowing'.

'Unknowing' experiences each moment afresh, without any pre-occupied content to urge it on.

Life manifests not from the birth of this body, but from the core of the uncaused cause.

Our mind can never grasp this. On one hand, life is unborn and is undying and on the other hand, it is being born and is dying every moment in itself. It is a grand paradox.

We, as scientists say the Universe is both expanding and contracting. We also say there is a black hole. We can call our movements of activity and rest or birth and death as expansions and contractions, similar to that of the Universe. But, if we fall into the black hole and are actually vanishing into it, will it be relevant to say that we are being blown in and out?

Yes, it is a grand suction, an eternal immutable void - the abyss. It is the realm of the Avadhoota.

The essence of us is the heart of life. When we find our essence, we begin to become present in the present. Just humbly being present, we are at once grounded and centred to our core and move with unencumbered ease - that is Life.

Life is a great circle. Loosening the identifications and the identifier himself is the way to participate in this great circle. This daring loosening allows us to flow, to become the whole circle. To hold on at any point on this circle is to forget our original unborn nature as there is no place we begin and nowhere we end.

Embracing the Self in an unobstructed fullness, yielding returns eternity. Silently, the whole universe gently falls transparent and open. No boundaries anywhere, everything here is a mirror for everything now and is transparent of everything.

In the spacious heart, Chit-Akasa, as fragrance emanates from a flower, Self yields Presence.

This makes the mirror-play that I am, too! In the symbiotic synchronised, finely orchestrated, grand simultaneity, the very present embraces and is embraced by all past and all future.

Our very presence is reflected everywhere and in everything and everywhere and everything resonates in us.

Even with each moment drifting to its next, everything manifests in its Grand Now. *Think about it... although each moment there is a multitude of cellular deaths and a multitude of cellular births within your body.... Does your face turn into another's?*

“Falling leaves from a tree. Paddy fields swaying in the wind. Neem trees burning a joyful green in the summer, heat. Pine trees breathed by the cold. The red lightening of the sun and a pale illumination of the moon. White flying cranes, under dark black clouds. Calmness in the face of a dead body. A smiling baby, its innocent gestures; A calf playfully running towards its mother; A stone - self-secluding, oblivious of the compulsive need to become an idol; Beauty of ever-rest completion spoken from the graveyard; Nodding of friends; Tender caring tears of a mother...”

Springing from itself and falling back on Itself, Creation, Sustenance and Destruction ends, there is no self at all.

Life's moving presence arises everywhere, each moment from its million points origin, from its absolute ever stay existence. Life has no preferences. The boundaries of race, country and religion, creed, the boundaries of time and space are irrelevant to life and living. Life is simple 'isness'. It just is.

We live once and that is forever.

*“No atom moves without Its motion,
This is the declaration of the Sages,
Perceive it thus:
What is knowing, and what is unknowing?
Who are the Knowers and the Knowers-not, Who?
Who are the Silent ones and the babblers like myself?
From where arises, the illusory mind?
Apart from IT is there anything?
Oh! Life of Life! That sustains everything,
In existence, here and here after,
Your plenitude that pervades All.”*

Thayumanavar Verse - 89



SONGS OF THE ACCOMPLISHED

Kudhambai Chittar songs...

Kudhambai Chittar is also one of the ancient Siddhas. When I was in the Nambhi Mountain ranges I had the opportunity to visit the cave where he had lived during his tapas (penance).

In all of his songs he mentions himself as Kudhambai. This is an ancient Tamil word, which has many meanings.

The root word Kudhambai comes from the word Kudham

earthen earring

the one which is boiling up

the one which bubbles up

the one which is furious/ agitated

For instance if we consider the meaning to be agitated, he is referring to the agitated mind. But he also refers to the agitated mind in the feminine gender as 'maid' or 'lass'. This is indicated by the word 'Kudhambai'. So the reader is free to assume any of the meanings, as the word is not confined.

Writing a commentary for songs, sutras, is nothing by our own interpretations since we are confining the original. And as the Siddha's songs are multifarious, it is not appropriate to confine it by any interpretations. Let us see this very multifarious nature of their songs depicted in one of them below.

*"For those who remain in the mountain, dining the juice of mango,
Where is the need for coconut milk - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for coconut milk?"*

Cryptic meaning:

In the coconut, the water is in stagnant form. This symbolises the static nature, ideational experience. But the mango fruit has nothing like water in it. There is a full-bodied outflow of juice. The person living in truth is the embodied nature of flowing life: living moment to moment in ever-fresh awareness.

Figurative meaning:

The shape of a coconut can be the symbol of a woman's breast. If the mango is looked at in a sleeping position, it represents a bowl. The milk from the breast symbolises passions, which generate further craving for passion, whereas the mango symbolises the bowl of nectar - the One who lives in the natural state, Sahaja Sthithi.

In this manner, we can continue to interpret many meanings, but it can only prove to deviate us from the original spirit of the songs. Just read the songs

and allow it to reach you however it wants. While you read, if it makes you calm stay there; if it makes you alive in spirit, flow in it; if it makes you angry, be angry - it is also a human way of adoring their songs.

*“For those who Realised, the Truth is plain expanse;
Where is the need for Royal grants - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for Royal grants?”*

*For those remaining as real Gnani, who realised the Truth,
Where is the need for Elixir - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for Elixir?*

*For those who repose with vacant eye,
Where is the need for spurious desires - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for spurious desires?*

*For those who have seen the uncorrupted path,
Where is the need for confusion - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for confusion?*

*For those who have seen the top and bottom of ‘It’,
Where is the need for disputation - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for disputation?*

*For those who remain in contemplation, bereft of sleep,
Where is the need for Mudra - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for Mudra?*

*For those who stand in mystical ground,
Where is the need for Mantra - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for Mantra?*

*For those who are in real penance,
Where is the need for sacrificial fire - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for sacrificial fire?*

*For those who reach the core inhering awareness,
Where is the need for withering - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for withering?*

*For those real Gnani who mastered the trinity of Tamil,
Where is the need for blabbering - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for blabbering?*

*For those reaching beyond the peak, who have seen
Supreme Expanse,
Where is the need for earthly cravings - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for earthly cravings?*

*For those who have seen Ethereal Light by searing without burns,
Where is the need to end passions - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need to end passions?*

*For those who go in ways unique, crossing without dying,
Where is the need for solitude - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for solitude?*

*For those liberated, who are dancing in Space,
Where is the need for magic - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for magic?*

*For those poised in awareness, who brim in bliss,
Where is the need for knowledge - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for knowledge?*

*For those who see daily the picturised drama,
Where is the need for documentation - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for documentation?*

*For those who as Gnani, emerge from triangle in oneself,
Where is the need for six-pointed triangle - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for six-pointed triangle? (Yantra)*

*For the Head who dancing all eight direction,
Where is the need for imitation - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for imitation?*

*For the real Gnani who attained liberation and abides as Self,
Where is the need for diet rules - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for diet rules?*

*For those who cast aside sorrow,
Where is the need for palanquin - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for palanquin?*

*For the real Gnanis who master Astanga Yoga,
Where is the need for props - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for props?*

*For those real Gnanis in whom subsided all urges,
Where is the need for Yoga - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for Yoga?*

*For those being in mountain, who conquered objectifying identity,
Where is the need for hearing compliments - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for hearing compliments?*

*For the real Gnanis who wander like the dead,
Where is the need for cymbals - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for cymbals?*

*For those who poised in IT, which is Seeing,
Where is the need for rejoice - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for rejoice?*

*For those who realised of the 'core', conquering death,
Where is the need for further undertakings - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for further undertakings?*

*There where is ¹onion, ²pepper and ³dry ginger,
Where is the need for eatables- Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for eatables?*

*For those who remain in the mountain, dining the juice of mango,
Where is the need for coconut milk - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for coconut milk?*

*For those who wander around town in day time,
Where is the need for covering - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for covering?*

*For those who don't have a sloping roof and house of their own,
Where is the need for gospel chanting - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for gospel chanting?*

*For those who reached the Supreme by realising oneself,
Where is the need for residual desires - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for residual desires?*

*For those who remain as the way to God,
Where is the need for direction - Oh lass Kudambai?
Where is the need for direction?*



^{1,2,3}- these cryptic words symbolise the trinity of philosophers stone or elixir.



APPENDIX

Some of the names of Samadhi Shrines I have visited and heard of from reliable sources have been given.

Meenakshi Amman Temple	Sri Vidya as the Goddess & Siva as Ellam Valla Siddhar, Madurai
Mayandi Swamigal	Thiru Koodal Malai
Somappa Swamigal	Thiru Koodal Malai
Kugai Kovil	Then paran Kundram
Nadana Gopala Nuyogi Swamigal	Kaatha Kinaru
Gorakkar Samadhi	Adhi Gorraakanath Temple, Thiruppuvanam
Mahalingam Malai	The tapas realm of the ancient Siddhas (Chaturagiri Mountain), Vathra Gruppu.
Valla Naatu Siddhar	Valla Naadu
Vishwamithra Ashram	Vijayapuri
Nambi Malai	Thaipaadham, Thiru kurung Kudi
Kudambai Siddhar Tapovanam	Nambimalai
Velambika Samadhi (woman Siddhar)	Bottom of Mahendra Giri Mountain
Bogar Peedam	Mahendra Giri Mountain
Bogar Samadhi Shrine	Palani
Eswara pattar Samadhi Shrine	Idumban Malai
Thiru Uddhara Kosa Mangai Temple	Ancient Tantric spot, Uddhara Kasa Mangai
Satti Swamigal Samadhi Shrine	Uddhara Kasa Mangai
Chellapa Swamigal	Ekka Kudi
Patanjali Peedam	Rameshwaram
Kolli Malai	Ancient mysterious mountain of the ancient Siddhas, Kolli Malai
Kaalanginathar Peedam	Kanchamalai
Mangai Mahali (Varahi) Temple	Uddhara Kosa Mangai
Saint Ramalingam, Vallalar Sathya Gnani Sabai	Vadalur
Natarajar Temple	Chidambaram
Ramanujar Shrine	Sri Rangam
Sada Siva Brahmendrar Samadhi Shrine	Nerur
Ramana Ashramam	Thiru annamali
Mathru Budheshwarar Temple	Ramana Ashramam (Sri chakra mehru continuing presence)
Yogi Ramsurat Kumar Ashramam	Thiru annamalai
Seshadri Ashram	Thiru annamalai
Adi Mudi Siddhar	Thiru annamalai
Virupaksha cave & Gugai NamaSivar shrine	Skandaashramam, on Thiru annamalai
Esanya Desikar Math	Thiru annamalai

Ammani Amma Samadhi Shrine (woman Siddhar)	Thiru annamalai
Gaudhamar Maharishi Shrine	Thiru annamalai
Poondi Mahan Shrine	Poondi
Paravadha Malai	
Velliangi Malai	
Pattinathar Samadhi Shrine	Thiruvotriyar
Kamaakshi Amman Temple	Kanchipuram
Saradha Ambal Temple	Shrikeri
Sri Sailam	Andhra Pradesh
Sri Ragavendra Temple	Mantralayam
Aggalkote Maharaj	Aggalkote
Gnaneshwar Shrine	Alandi
Shirdi Sai Baba	Shirdi
Upasani Maharaj	Sarkuri
Gajanam Maharaj	Nasik
Lord Venkateshwara	Thirupatti
Alagar Kovil	Madurai
Narasimha peetam, Ramadevar Siddhar	
Agasthiyar Temple	Papanasam
Agasthiyar Kudil	Karaiyar Dam
Khwaja Mohaidheen	Ajmer
Tattha Peedam	Gimar
Sivanandar Paramhamsa Samadhi shrine	Vadakara, Kerala
Bagavadhi Amman Temple	Chottani karai
Mohambigai Temple	Kallur
Renugambal Temple (Chinnamastha Goddess)	Padaiveedu
Kumari Amman (Goddess Valai)	Kanya Kumari
Pancha Lingam	Thiru chendur
Er Vadi Darga	Ervadi
Beer Mohammed	Thakkalai
Mouni Swami Samadhi Shrine	Nambi malai
Muthu Vaduganathar Temple	Singampunari
Kaamagya	Orissa
Taajudhi Baba	
Baba John	Nagpur
Naga Dheertham	Nagamalai
Gopal Swami Samadhi Shrine	Ramnad
Kulandaiya Nandhar Samadhi Shrine	Madurai
Reddiya Patti Swami	Reddiyapatti
Mouna Guru Swami Shrine	Kasavanampatti
Tayumnavar Swami Shrine	Ramnad
Mayamma Samadhi Shrine	Salem
Kodi Swami Shrine	

Ananda Mai Ma	Rishikesh
Ramakrishna Parmahamsar	Dakshineshwar Temple
Saadhu Appadhovai	Thirukonamalai, Sri Lanka
Yogar Swami Shrine	Sri Lanka
Chellapa Swamigal Shrine	Sri Lanka
Kadaiyil Swami, Natarajar Shrine	Sri Lanka
Ancient Murugan Temple	Katthir Kaamam, Sri Lanka
Muruganar Manthiram	Ramnad
Sadhu Om Samadhi Shrine	Thiru annamalai
Ramana Manthiram	Madurai
Sundara Manthiram	Thiruchidi
Eral Arunachala Swami	Eral
Annamalai Swami	Thiru annamalai
Vido Ba Swami Samadhi Shrine	Bolur
Dakshina Murthi Swami	Thiruvaarur
Muthu Swami Dhikchithar Samadhi Shrine	Ettaiyapuram
Thiyagara Swamigal, Nada Brahmam	Thiruvaiyaru
Thirumoolar Peedam	Thiruvaaduthurai
Guru Namasivayar Samadhi Shrine	Arudaiyur Kovil
Chidambaram Swamigal	Thiruporur
(merged in temple shrine)	
Sundaresa Sarma Samadhi Shrine	Veera cholam
Dhatha peet	Gangapur
Naganath Temple	Nayinar Kovil



GLOSSARY

A

Adharam	Base
Aham	I
Agama	Literature of Tantra, Dravidians
Akasa	Space, Sky
Amritha	Ambrosia, nectar
Anubhava	Experience
Andam	Cosmos
Anahatam	Cardiac plexus in heart region
Agnai	Pineal plexus
Apana	Downward moving air element
Arul	Grace
Avadhoota	Literally a 'non – messenger'
Agni	Fire
Amla (nellikai)	Gooseberry, a sour fruit
Ardhanareeswara	The form of half Shiva & half Sakthi combined, (equal combination of both masculine & feminine aspect)
Asana	Posture
Asura	
Avathar	Divine Incarnation
Asuddha	Impure
Ahamkara	Individuating Principle, Power of identification

B

Bakthi	Devotion
Brahma	The ruling deity of Hypogastric Plexus, the creator
Bindu	Literally point, centripetal force
Buddhi	Intellect
Bhuta	Element
Bala varga	One of the lineage; of ancient Siddhas, founder as Lord Murugan
Brahmarandhra	Entrance, aperture to the Ultimate
Brahman	The Absolute, The Ultimate

C

Chandra	Moon
Chandra kalai	Path of Moon, frontal line of energy pathway in human body (in this book)
Chit	Pure consciousness

Chittar	One who abides as pure consciousness
Chakra/ chakram	Plexus, energy centres
Chinmudra	The forefinger rests on the thumb, other fingers are separate and open
D	
Dharma	Inherent order of existence
Dosham	Humor
Dhyanam	Meditation, the whole perception Beyond intellect
Dwadhasantham	Literally the twelfth place, the place where Ultimate Yogic experience occurs
G	
Ganapathi	A male deity ruling basal energy center
Gathi	Gait
Gnana / Gnanam	Wisdom / realisation
Guru	Master
Gnanendriya	Senses of perception
H	
Hridaya	Heart
I	
Idam	This
Ida Nadi	A major energy channel running on the left side of the body through which, the nature of passion predominantly works
Indriya	Sense powers, senses
J	
Japa	Repetition of a holy name, Mantra
Jothi	Light
Jiva	Individual soul
K	
Kan	Eve
Kala / Kaala	Time
Kumbha Kalasha	
Kalai	Fragmentary part, channel
Kalari	Ancient South Indian Martial Art System

Kapham	One of the three humors majorly dominated by water element
Karma	Law of action & reaction, binding force of action
Kaal	literally leg, Prana in yogic terms
Karpagam	wish fulfilling
Kundalini	The spiritual energy, also the energy not fully realised within the body
Kumbagam	Breath retention
Kriya	Action
Kaya Kalpam	Procedure in Siddha system for physical rejuvenation & longevity
Kovil	temple
Kandam	throat
L	
Laxmi	Female deity ruling solar plexus energy center
M	
Manas	Cosmic mind
mana	Individual mind
Mahat	Primal intelligence
Mantharam / Mantra	Sacred Sounds
Moolavarga	One of the lineages of ancient Siddha founder as Thirumoolar
Maya	Illusion, cosmic delusion
Maya suzhi	spot in the frontal position of forehead
Moksha	Liberation
Mukthi	Realisation (of truth), salvation
Mudra	Symbolic gesture, particular gesture to channelise energy in yogic practice
Muladhar /	
Mooladharam	Pelvic plexus, basal chakra, first energy center
Maheswara	Male deity ruling the energy center in throat area, carotid plexus
Maheswari	Female deity ruling the energy center in throat area, carotid plexus
Moolagni	The fire in the base, kundalini heat
Manonmani	Female deity ruling pineal plexus, energy center in the fore head
Muni	Ascetic
Muyalakan	A demon, symbol of ignorance
Maharishi	Great Seer

N

Nadi	Energy channel, pulse
Nada	Primal sound
Natarajar	Siva in dancing form
Niradharam	Without base
Nadanusandhana	Absorption in the inner sounds

O

Ojas	The part of ambrosia that upholds the seven basic tissues of the body & rejuvenates them.
Om / Omkar	The cosmic vibration, sound or primal vibration at the time of creation, also universal mantra

P

Paduka	Sandals of a Holy person
Panch Bhuthas	Five elements, sense particulars
Pitham / Pitta	One of the three humors, majorly dominated by the fire element
Poorvam	Here / beginning
Prakrithi	Cosmic substance/ Primal substance
Purusha	Primal/ cosmic spirit
Prana	Life force
Pingala Nadi	Main energy channel running on right side of the body, through which the nature of 'will' predominantly works
Pindam	Body
Poorakam / Puraka	Inhalation, assimilation
Pranayama	Expansion of prana by breathing practice
Poorna / Purna	Fullness
Pooja	Ritual worship

R

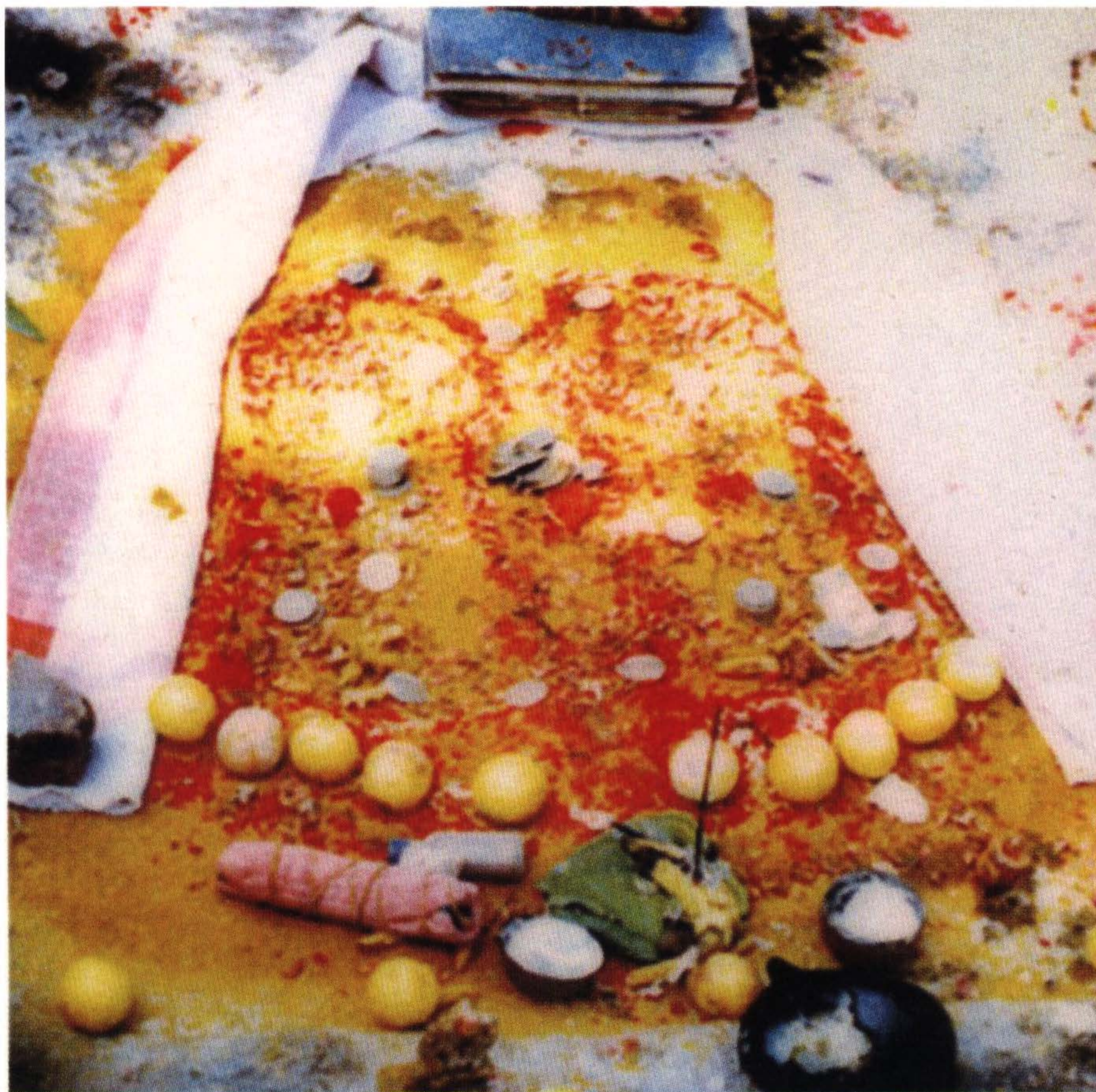
Rishi Patni	Spiritual Wife
Rudra	Male deity ruling Heart center/plexus
Rudri	Female deity ruling Heart center/ plexus
Rajasa / Rajas	Dynamic principle / attribute of nature
Rasa	Nourishing devoted mood
Rechaka / Resaka	Exhalation / depletion

S

Sadasiva	Male deity ruling pineal plexus in eyebrow center
Sadhaka	Spiritual aspirant

Sadhana	Spiritual practice
Saraswathi	Female deity ruling hypogastric plexus
Sahasradalam	Field of thousand petaled lotus, area on the top of the head
Samadhi	Merging with source (Sam + adhi)
Samadhi shrine	(i) Tomb of sage, to be worshipped (ii) The place where the sage attained realisation and one can feel His presence.
Sat	Being, existence
Samskara	Mental impressions
Satva	The harmony (or) balancing nature of 3 attributes, illuminating attribute of nature
Sahasrarm	Axis of the thousand petaled lotus, above Suzhi Munai or Agnai Chakra
Sakthi	Goddess / Female deity, Universal power of consciousness
Siva	Male Deity, God, Pure consciousness
Sivam	The Source, The Ultimate
Sastra	An authoritative treatise on any subject
Sri chakra	Symbolic composition / representation of the universal power (Sakthi)
Swadhistanam	The second energy center, hypogastric plexus
Summa Iru	Just be, denoting non-activity
Siddha	Person who attained perfection
Suddha	Pure, unpolluted
Sahaja manush	Spontaneous man or person
Siddhi	perfection, psychic powers
Sthula	Gross
Sushumna / Sushamza	Central channel anterior to the spinal cord
Suzhi munai	The center of vortex on the end of central channel (true agnai chakra)
Suksma	subtle
Sutra	Axiom
Surya	Sun
Surya Kalai	Path of Sun as the posterior line in the human body
Surya saram	Solar breath, right nostril breath
Sanjeevi	Ever living
Suddhi	Purification
Swara Yoga	one of the branches of ancient yogic system dealing with the science of the breath-cycle.
T	
Tamil	Language spoken by the people living in Tamil Nadu state in India

Tamasa	The restraining quality of the three attributes in nature
Tanmatra	Subtle elements
Tattvas	Principle of cosmic evolution
Tantra	The spiritual path that gives importance to the human faculty of passion, (emotions, feelings), also‘ weaving nature’
Tapas	Self discipline in austerity, intense penance
Tejas	lustre or brilliance
Trimurti	The Holy Trinity: Lords Siva, Lord Vishnu & Lord Brahma
U	
Upanishad	Ancient pedantic scripture of India
Upasana	worshipping of personal deity with a specific procedure
Uma	Consort of Siva
Utharam	Beyond / above
Udukkai	a mini drum
Upadesha	personal spiritual instruction
V	
Vaasi (yoga)	Primal pulsation, primordial esoteric breathing practice unique to Siddha tradition, (not classical pranayam)
Valam	(in Sanskrit pradakshina), clockwise circumambulation of a holy place or holy person
Vasal	gate
Visuddhi	Energy center in throat area, carotid plexus
Varma	Vital Spot
Vallabai	Female deity ruling the first energy center in pelvic area
Vedas	Ancient scriptures in Sanskrit language
Vishnu	Male deity ruling solar plexus energy center
Vedanta	Culmination of Vedic philosophy
Vatha / Vatham	One of the three humors majorly dominated by Air element
Y	
Yantra	(Geometrical) symbol representing sakthi
Yoga	literally ‘union’, A spiritual path that gives exclusive importance to the human faculty of ‘will’



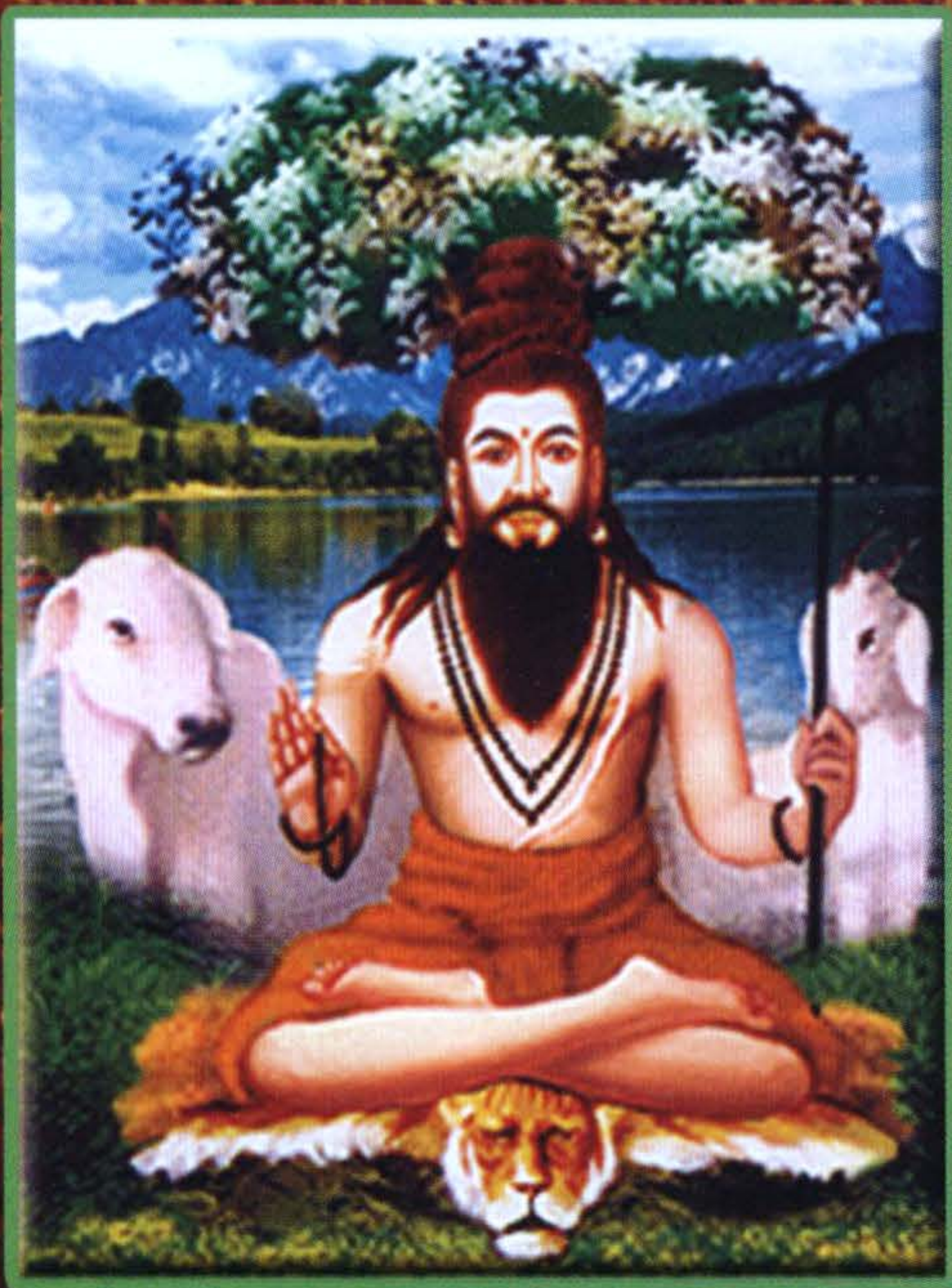
The Holy feet of Siddha Bogar
(Found in the Mundanthurai Tiger Forest of
Mahendragiri Mountain Range)



Ancient Siddhas



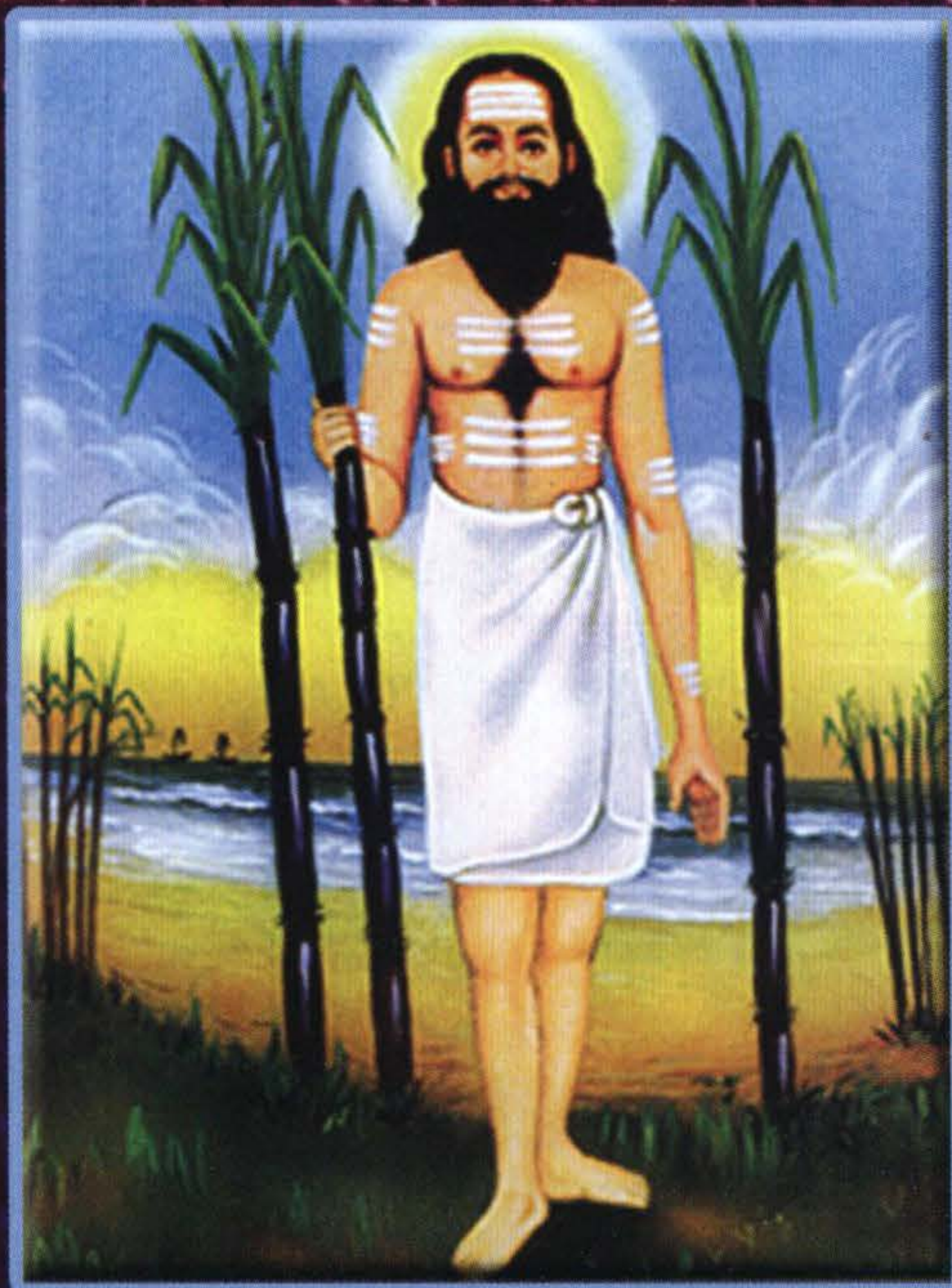
Kagabusundar Sribahuladevi



Idaikattu Siddha



Siddha Thiruvalluvar



Siddha Pattinathar

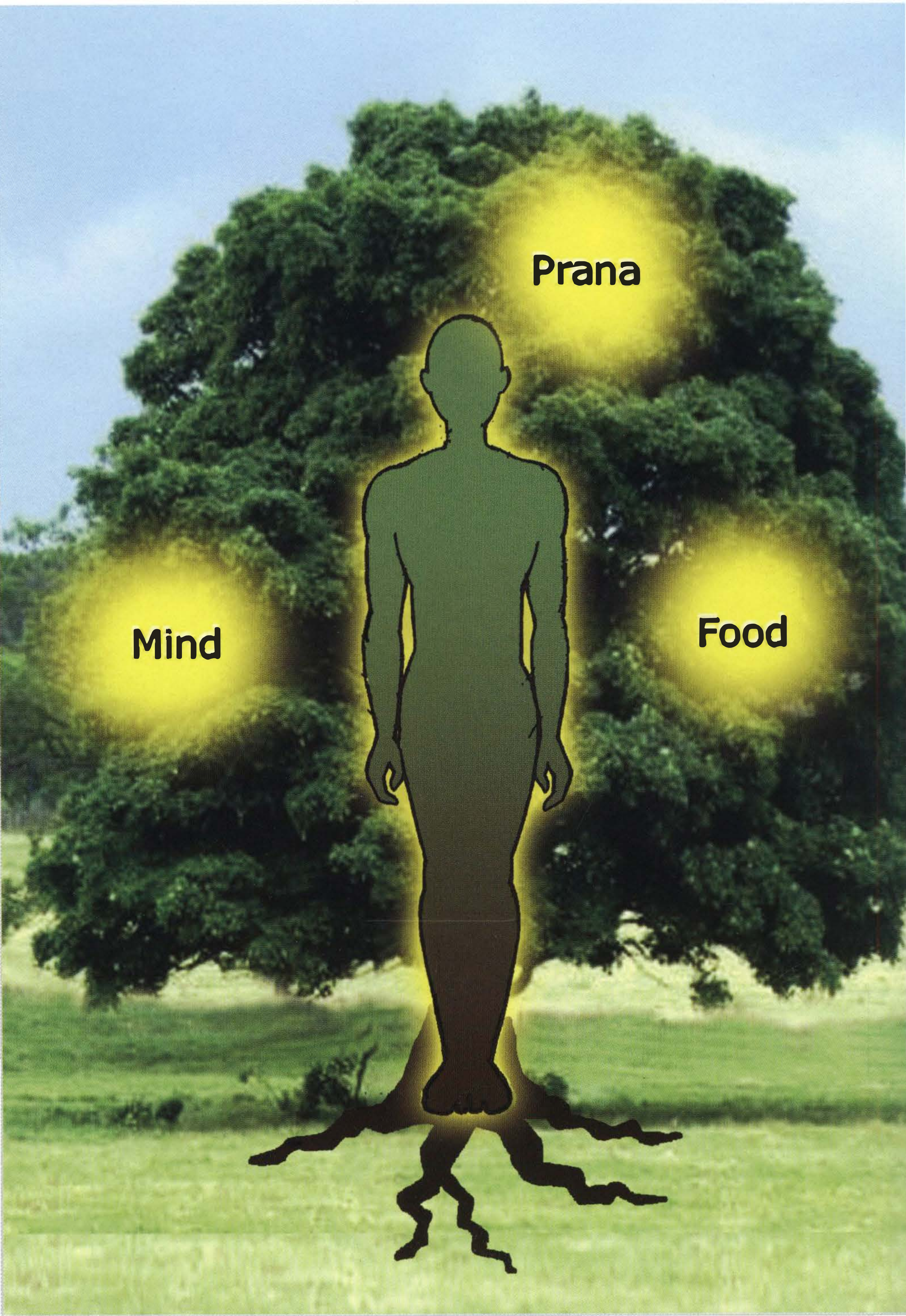


Siddha Ramalingam



Creation

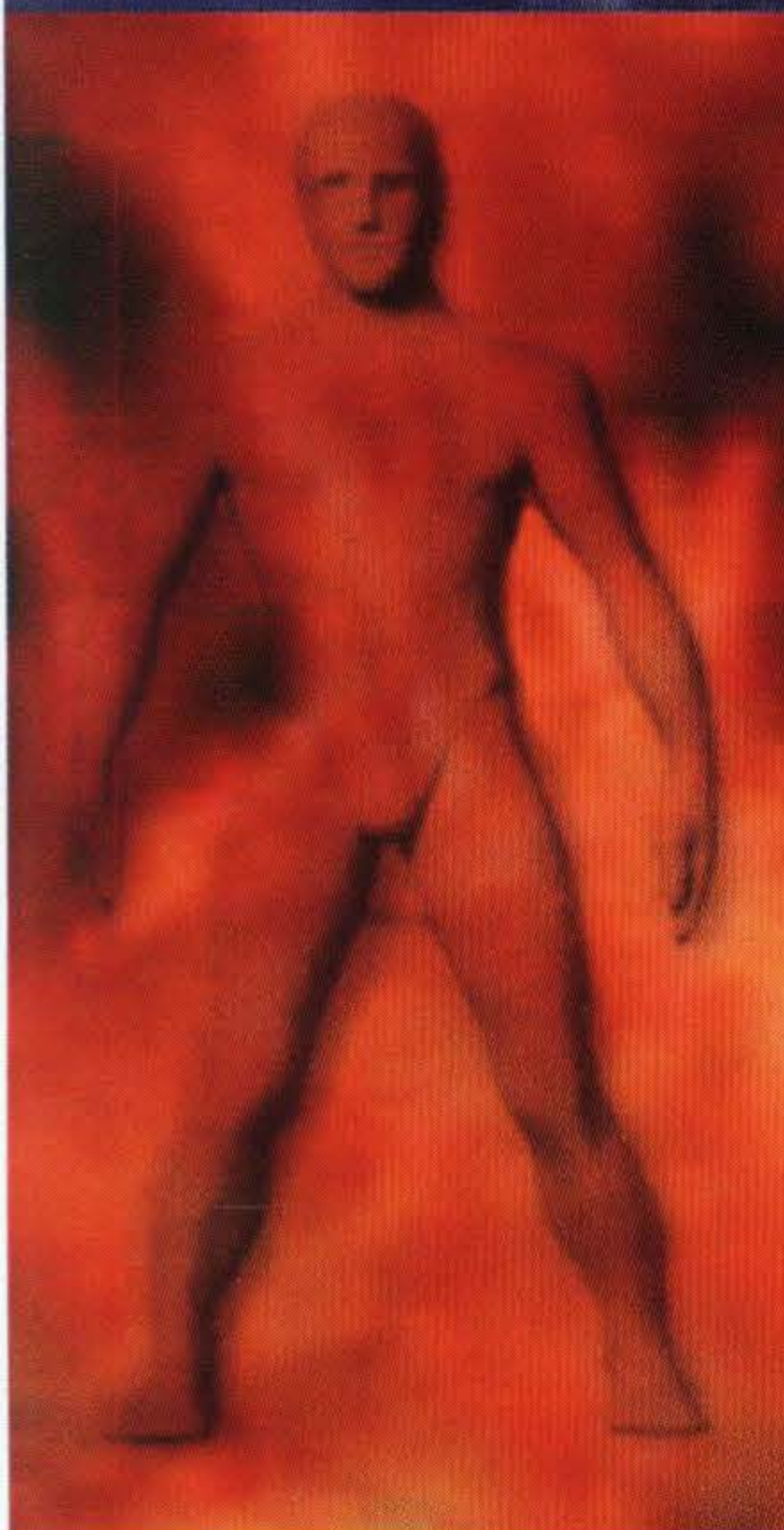
Tree of Life - Branches





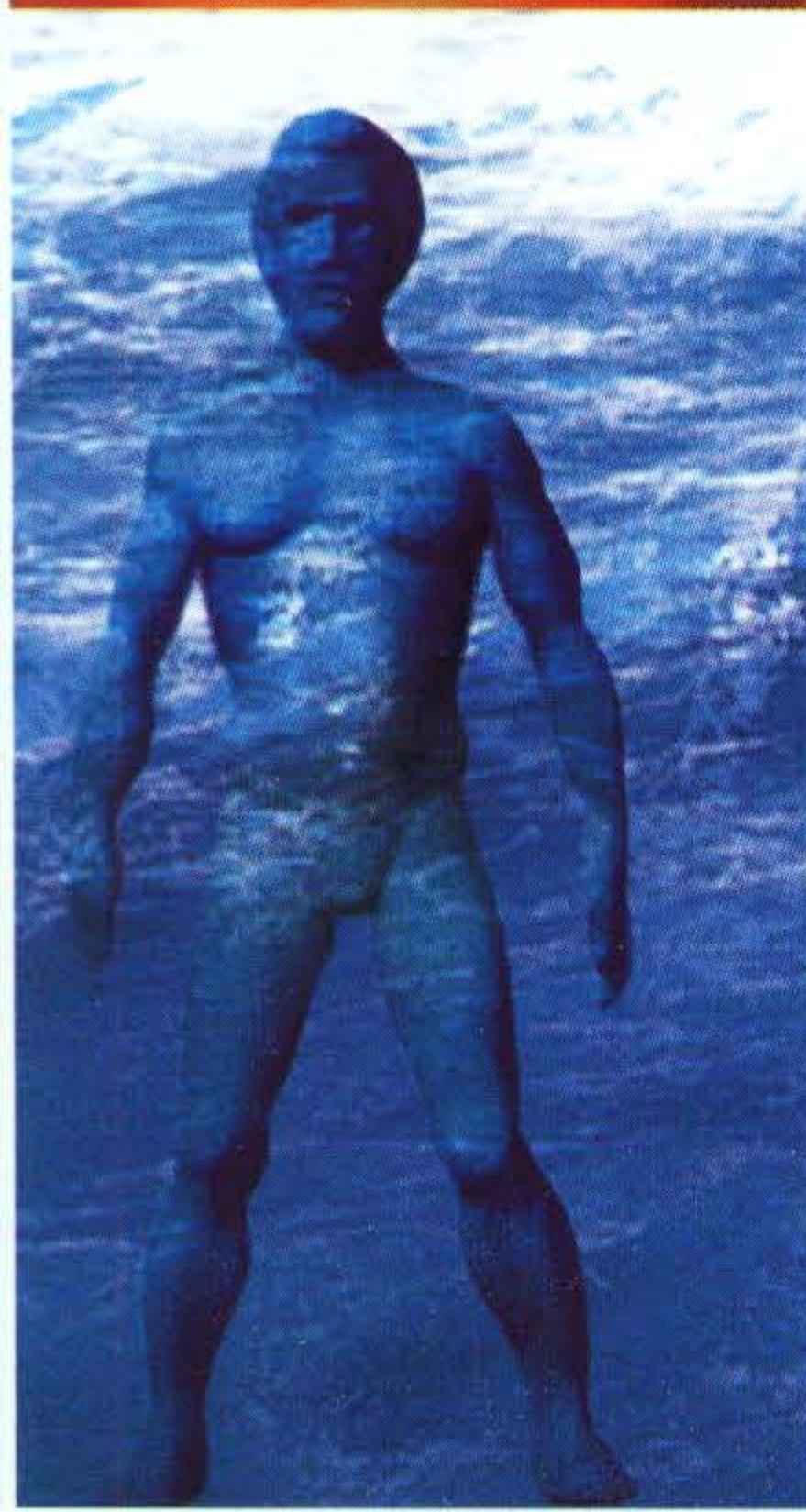
Vatha

Vatha people tend to be thin with light bones



Pitta

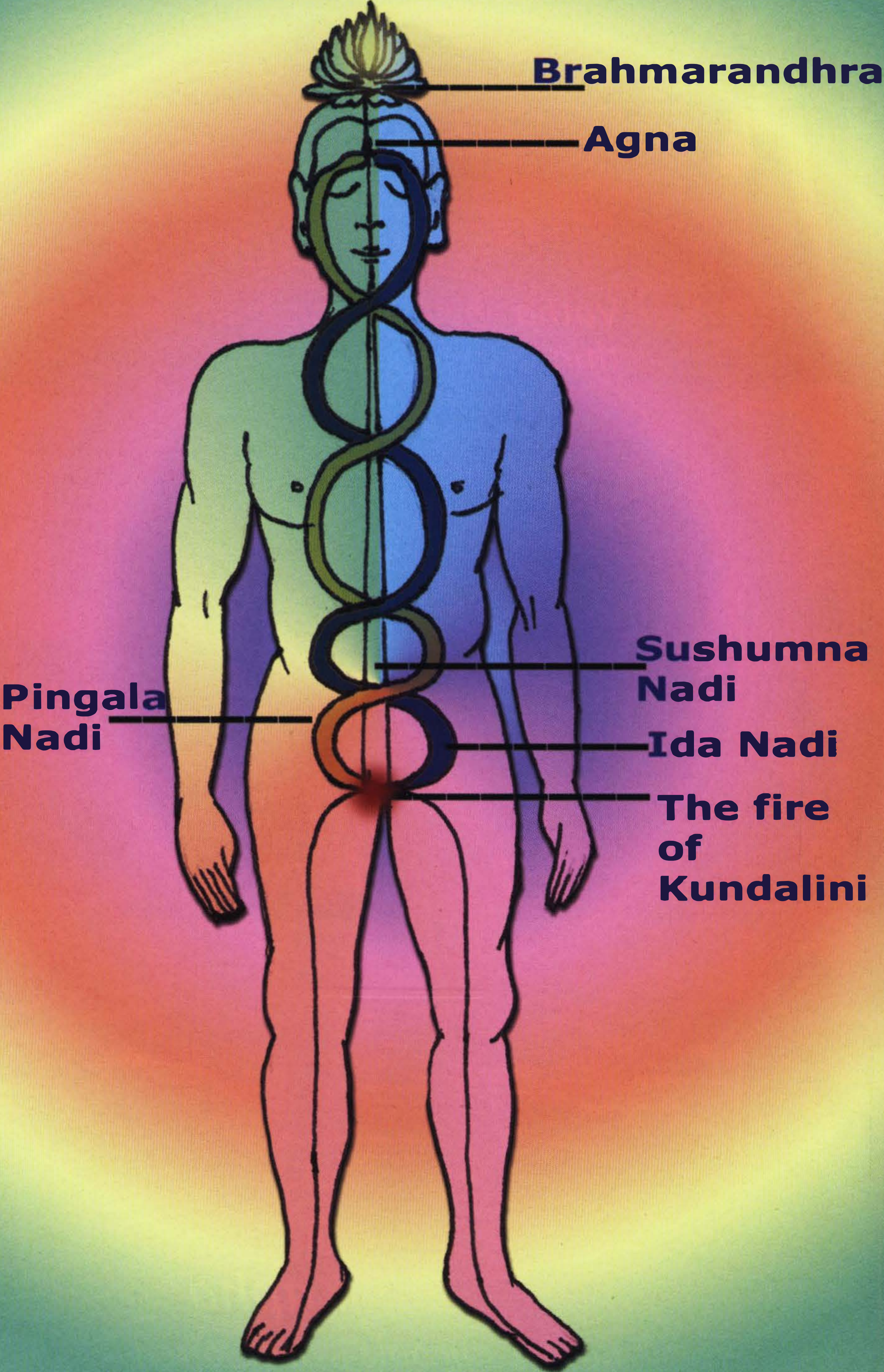
Pitta people are medium build and fair - skinned



Kapha

Kapha people are often large and overweight

NADIS INSIDE OF THE HUMAN BODY



CHAKRAS



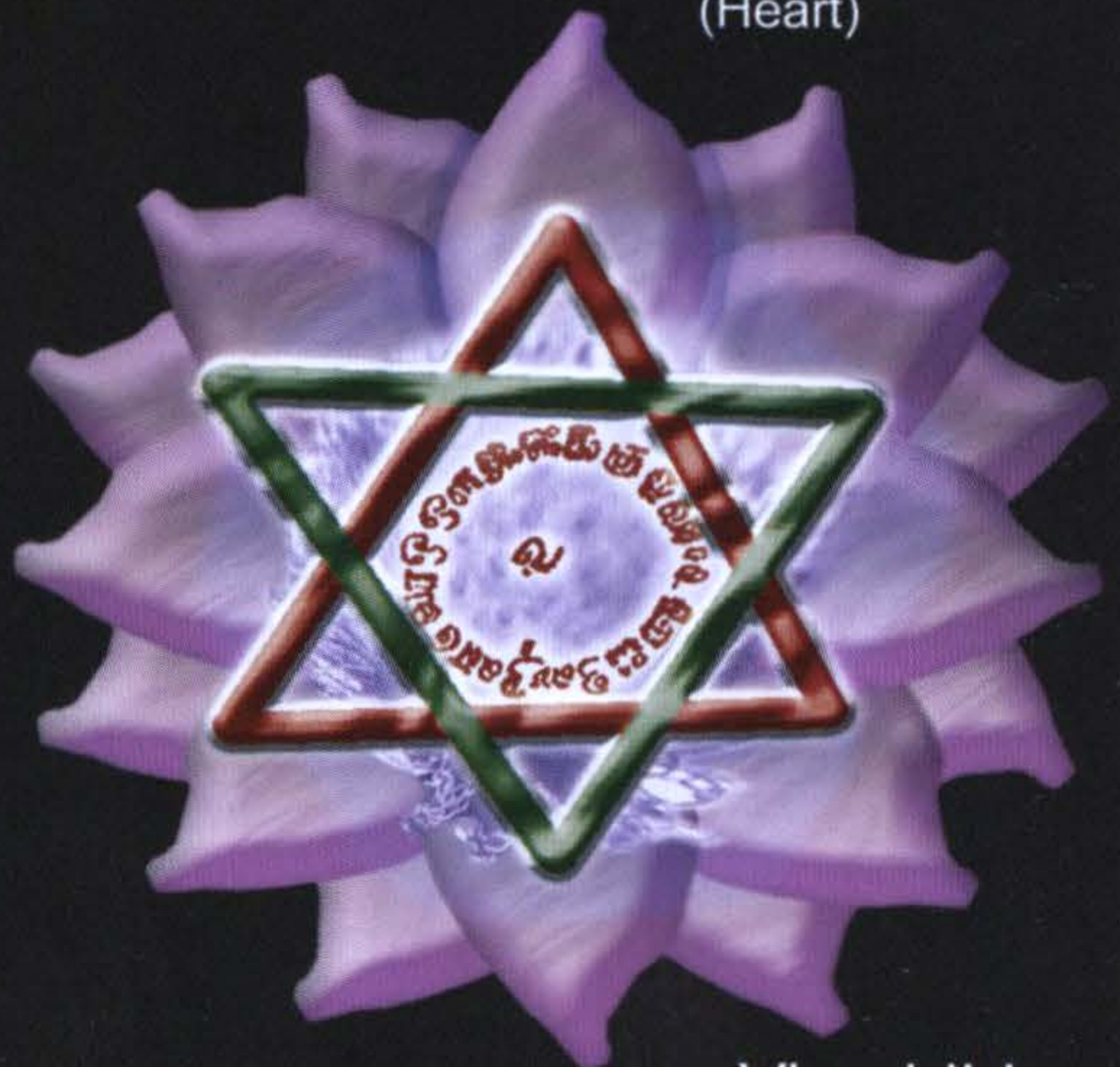
Mooladharam
(Basal/ Root)



Anahatam
(Heart)



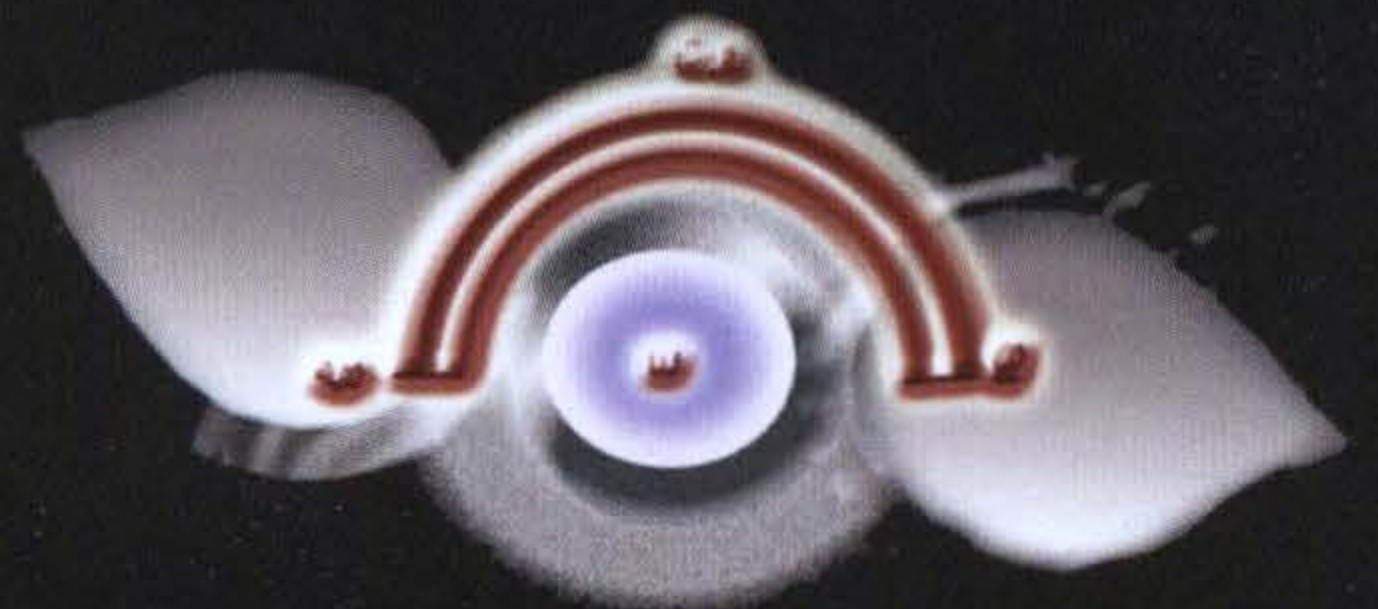
Swadhisthanam
(Lower Abdomen)



Visuddhi
(Throat)



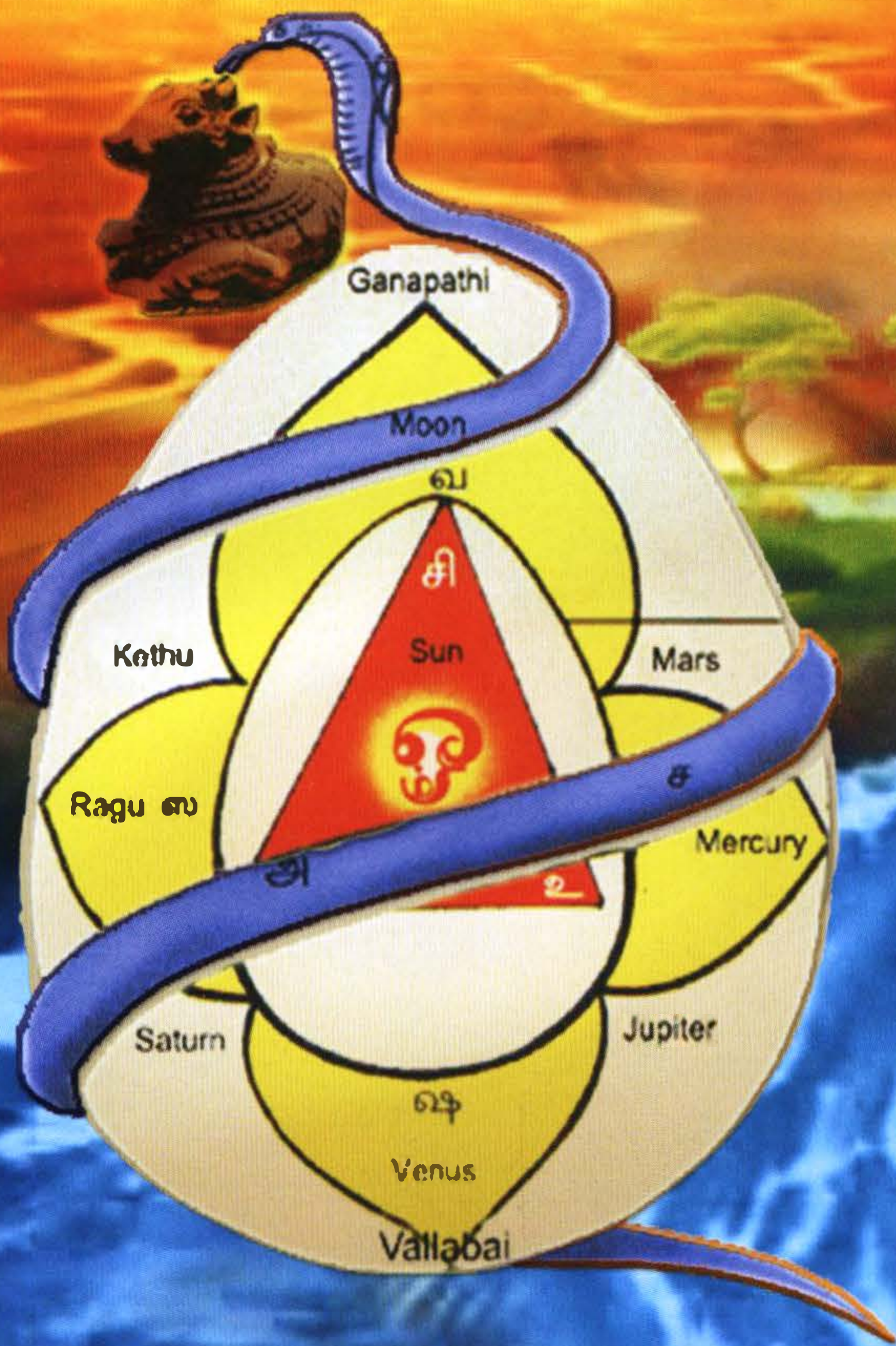
Manipoorakam
(Solar Plexus)



Agnai
(Eye-brow)



Yogic Experience



Elixir of Life



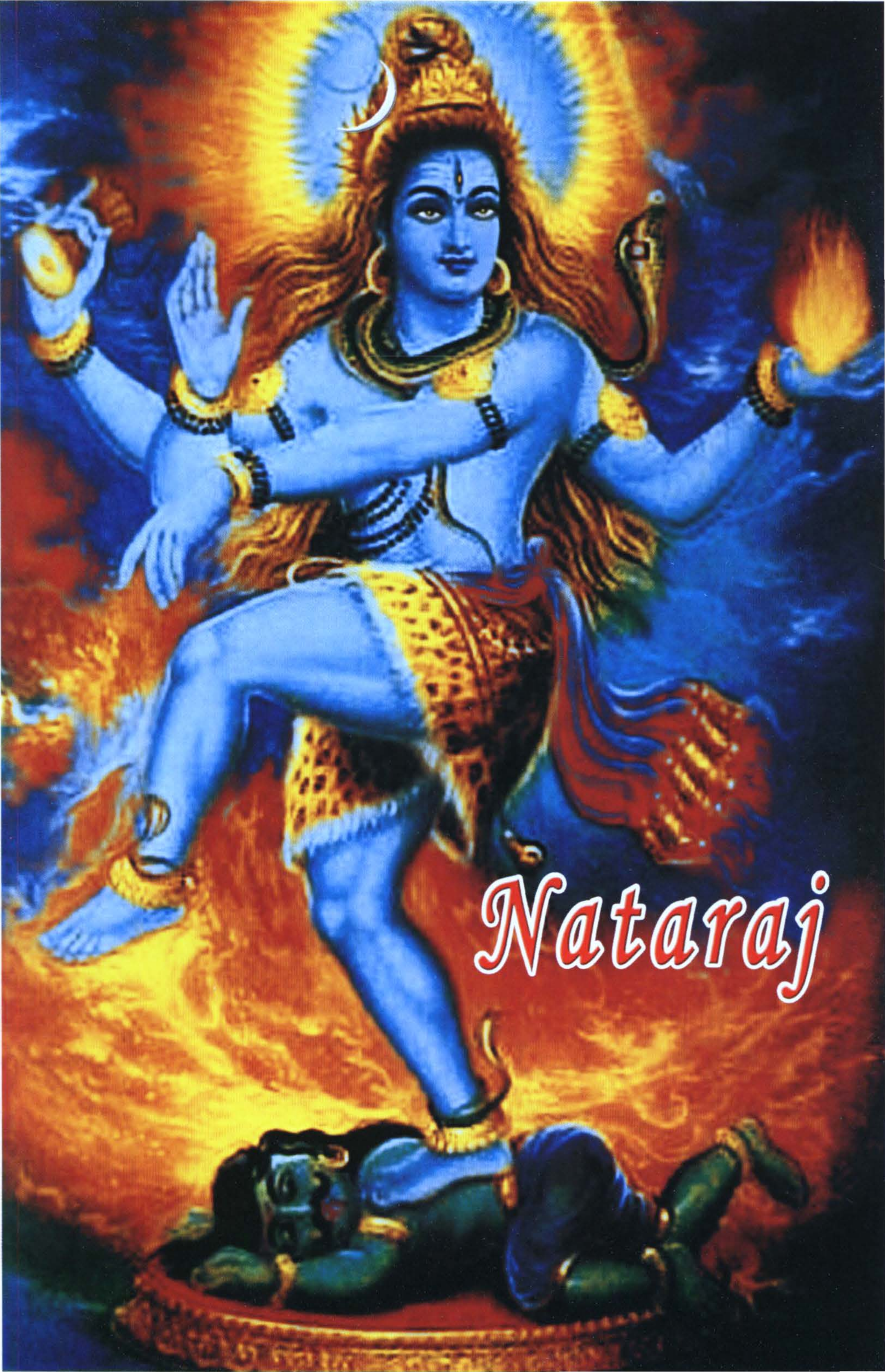
Chin Mudra Ganapathi



Anjaneya



LORD KRISHNA



Nataraj



Ucchistha Vallabai Ganapathi

TANTRIC GODDESSES



CHINNAMASTA



THRIPURA SUNDARI



MATHANGI



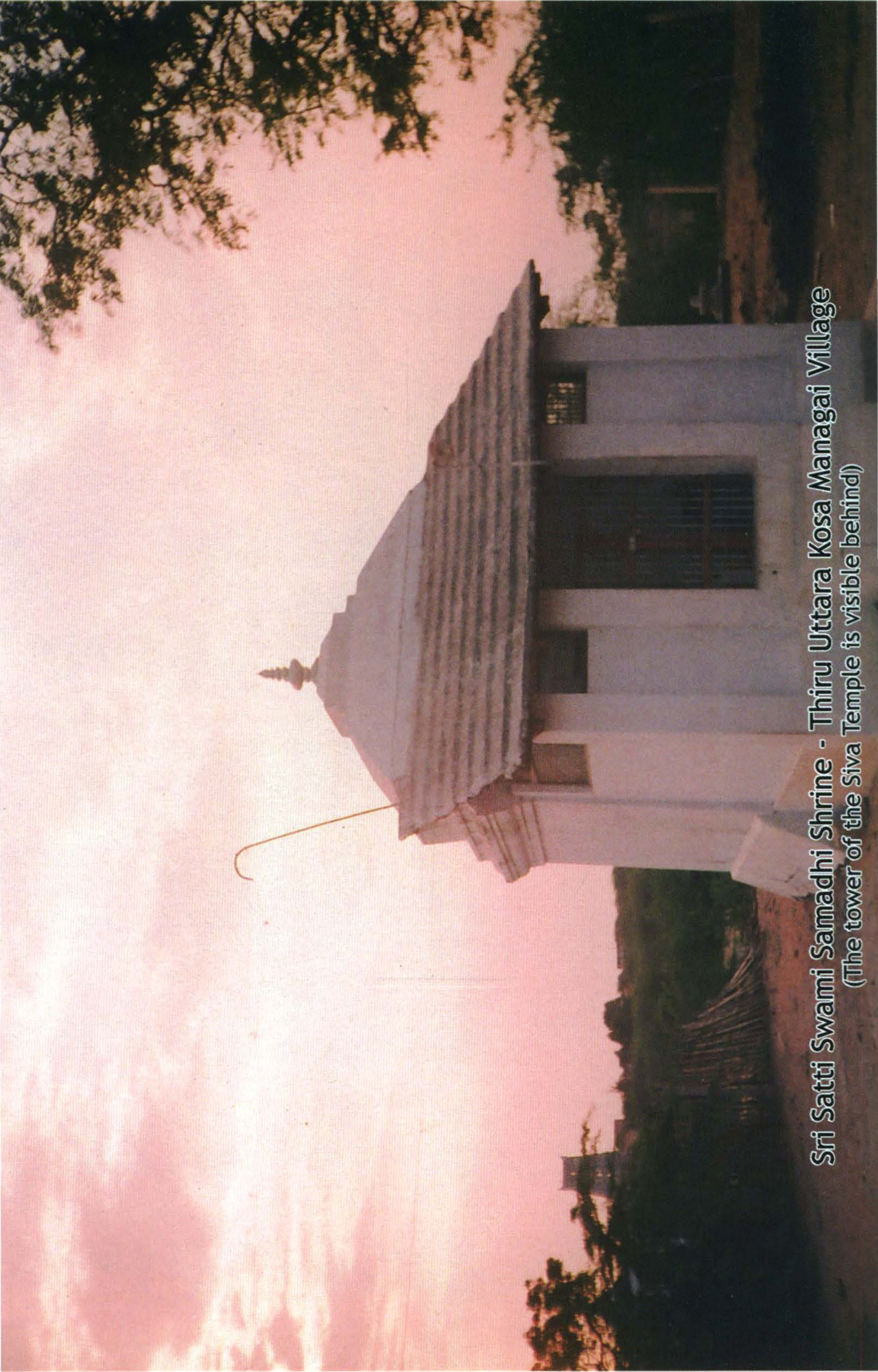
VARAHI



Thirupurai
(Thirumanthiram - Verse - 1073)



Goddess Kali

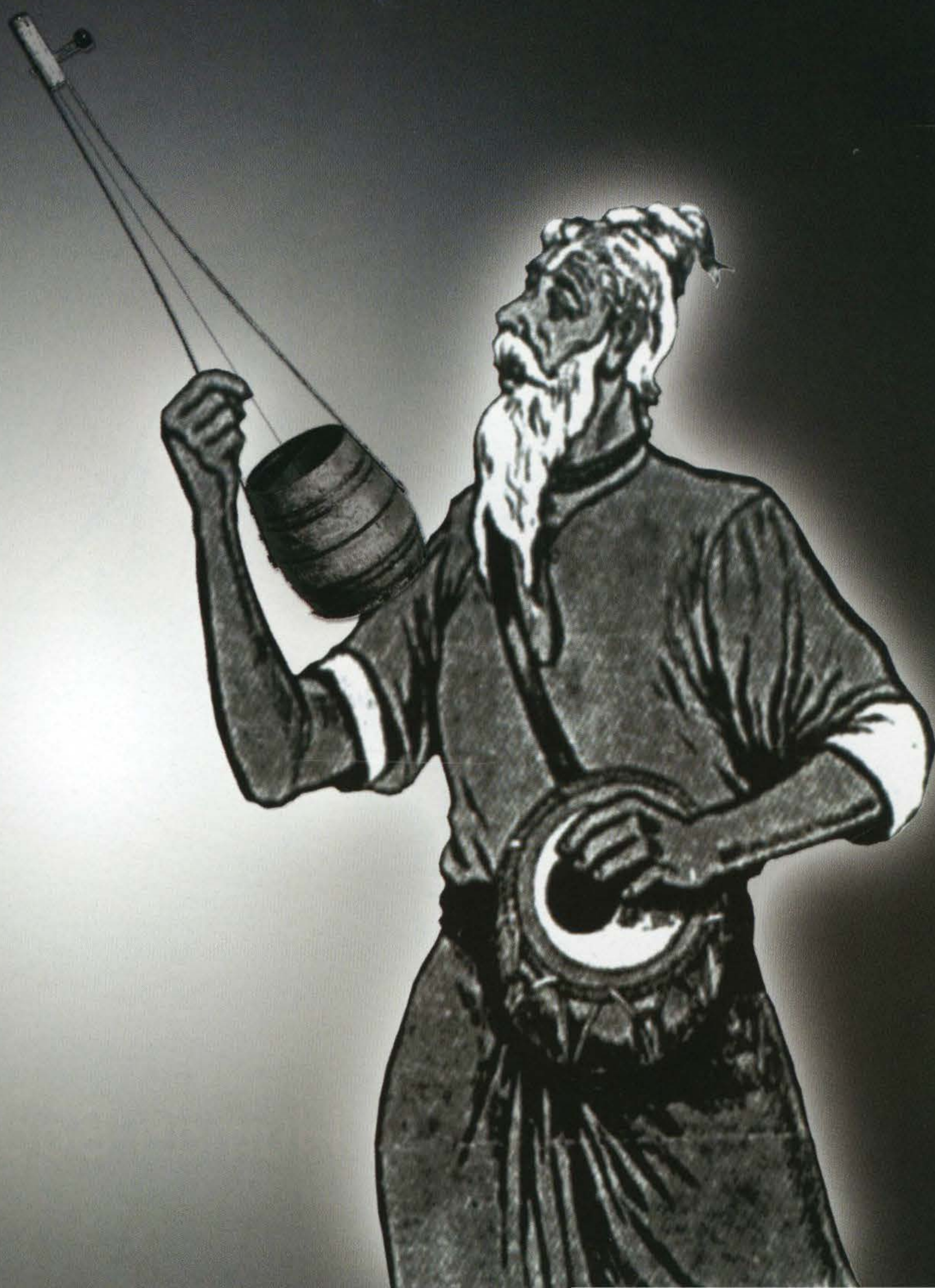


Sri Satti Swami Samadhi Shrine - Thiru Uttara Kosa Managai Village
(The tower of the Siva Temple is visible behind)



Sri Chakra in Human Body

*"Neither Creation,
Nor Destruction
Never, Never, Never"*





Avadhoot Siddhas
(Reluctant Masters)